

# **Reconciling Irreconcilables? The British Government's Comprehensive Approach to Post-Conflict Peacebuilding**

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## Abstract

A wide number of contributions to the peacebuilding literature have decried the limitations and constraints of liberal peacebuilding, to such an extent that the very term has begun to assume vaguely pejorative overtones. Concerns for the health and well-being of liberal peacebuilding have accumulated to the extent that Roland Paris has issued a plaintive call for liberal peacebuilding to be 'saved' (2010). In this thesis, I critically engage with the comprehensive approach, one of the central mechanisms that has enabled liberal peacebuilding to redefine and rearticulate its terms of reference. I begin from the assumption that the comprehensive approach does not anticipate the post-liberal peace that has been heralded by some observers (see Richmond, 2011); quite the contrary, it instead provides the basis for reformulation or adaptation *within* the terms that have been established by liberal peacebuilding. In continuing to hold out this tantalising possibility, the comprehensive approach continues, more than 20 years after its first articulation, to cast a seductive spell over its adherents. In this thesis, I critically assess how the comprehensive approach framework has been engaged and developed by one of its leading proponents (the British Government). I break the approach down into three dimensions of comprehensiveness (deepening, contextuality and complementarity), with a view to illustrating how the textual reproduction of each dimension has been accompanied by a set of contradictions and tensions. In doing so, I propose to explore how discursive 'broadening' and 'deepening' has been accompanied by a range of contradictions and tensions. In unravelling these contradictions, I then draw upon Foucauldian concepts and themes to argue that each and every advancement of freedom (whether through the form of empowerment, participation or contextual engagement) has been considerably more ambiguous than the standard narrative of the comprehensive approach – which reproduces the impression of an incremental progression – would have us believe. In questioning and probing the proposition that the comprehensive approach overcomes or reconciles the contradictions and tensions of liberal peacebuilding, I instead suggest a disconcerting reversion to prior points of reference.

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## **Abbreviations**

CAR – Capable, Accountable and Responsive States

CHASE – Conflict, Humanitarian and Security Department

DDR – Demobilisation, Disarmament and Reintegration

DfID – Department for International Development

EU – European Union

FCAS – Fragile and Conflict-Affected States

FCO – Foreign and Commonwealth Office

HMG – Her Majesty's Government

ICISS – International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty

MDG – Millennium Development Goals

MoD – Ministry of Defence

NATO – North Atlantic Treaty Organisation

OECD – Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development

OECD (DAC) – Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development  
(Development Assistance Committee)

PBSO – Peacebuilding Support Office

PCRU – Post-conflict Reconstruction Unit

PRS – Poverty Reduction Strategy

SCA – Strategic Conflict Assessment

SSR – Security Sector Reform

SU – Stabilisation Unit

UK – United Kingdom

UN – United Nations

UNDP – United Nations Development Programme

US – United States



## Acknowledgements

In reflecting back upon the PhD, it is hard to say whether the overall experience has lived up to my initial expectations – this is largely because these expectations are now part of the long and distant past. If it seems like a lifetime since I first stepped onto the University campus, perhaps that is because it effectively was. It is not just my thesis that has changed in the intervening years.

The journey has not been easy, and it feels like something of an achievement to submit a thesis of any description. Upon beginning their PhD project, the PhD student often has some vague sense of what the project will ultimately look like. Given that a whole horizon of possibilities stretches ahead, it is almost impossible to appreciate that the key question of the PhD is what can be achieved within the constraints that time and other limitations impose upon you. Perfectionists may well start a PhD, but they probably will not finish it.

In concluding, I would like to thank my parents, along with the undergraduate students that participated in my tutorial classes, who contributed to my thinking just as I hopefully contributed to theirs.



# **The Comprehensive Approach, Post-Conflict Peacebuilding and a Research Agenda**

## **Introduction**

In the years since the early 1990s, when the thawing of the Cold War precipitated the emergence of an international consensus upon conflict intervention, liberal peacebuilding has consolidated into the pre-eminent framework of reference that guides and sustains the post-conflict conduct of international, regional and state actors. In their engagements with post-conflict contexts, peacebuilding actors have largely operated within a liberal framework of reference. This framework is ubiquitous to the extent that unfamiliar observers could be forgiven for equating liberal peacebuilding with peacebuilding per se.

Liberal peacebuilding can be traced back to the Liberal Peace. MacGinty defines the Liberal Peace as ‘the concept, condition and practice whereby leading states, international organisations, and international financial institutions promote their version of peace through peace-support interventions, control of international financial architecture, support for state sovereignty and the international status quo’ (2008, 143).

The Liberal is a broad tradition within the field of international relations that holds that ‘certain kinds of (liberally constituted) societies will tend to be more peaceful, both in their domestic relations, and in their international relations, than illiberal states are’ (Newman, Paris and Richmond 11).

The ‘Liberal peace’ provides the predominant contextual ‘background’ against which peacebuilding discourse is framed. It is not always explicitly invoked; in many instances, it functions as an unspoken set of assumptions, an implicit framework of reference that appears to be almost beyond question or contestation. Its deeply ideological character is underlined by its unquestioning reproduction of the central wisdom of the contemporary age – the belief that that liberal market democracy is superior to all other forms of governance (Paris 2002, 638).

Despite the fact that it is deeply rooted in ideological foundations, liberal peacebuilding is not a static form; quite the contrary – it has, over the course of

its history, consistently evidenced a highly impressive capacity for reinvention. In acknowledging this capacity, MacGinty observes that liberal peacebuilding has been modified in recent decades through the mainstreaming of human rights, the rise of the human security perspective, the growing influence of conflict resolution NGOs, and the incorporation of alternative frameworks for dispute resolution (2008, 145).

In engaging with this broad theme of reformulation, I attribute discursive 'broadening' and 'widening' to the pervasive and sustained influence of the comprehensive approach. The comprehensive approach (somewhat confusingly, practitioners sometimes use the term interchangeably with 'whole-of-government' or 'integrated') is a policy axiom that has gained ground within a range of policy spheres (not just post-conflict peacebuilding). The British Government's Stabilisation Unit, in a document entitled 'Comprehensive Approach', observes that it seeks to 'promote a shared understanding of the situation and common aims and objectives'. It also 'develop[s] structures and processes to help align planning and implementation' and 'establish[es] relationships and cultural understanding' (2006). While the comprehensive approach is not intrinsically liberal, it has nonetheless become closely associated with the practice of liberal peacebuilding.

The comprehensive approach therefore provides the background against which the practice of post-conflict intervention has developed. A separate Stabilisation Unit document, entitled 'The Integrated Approach is Essential' (2010) (policy practitioners use the words 'comprehensive' and 'integrated' interchangeably), equates the comprehensive with improved levels of inter-departmental co-operation and coordination.

Upon closer reflection, this appears to be a somewhat narrow interpretation of comprehensiveness. In the course of this thesis, I will understand the comprehensive approach in broader perspectives, arguing that it anticipates a deepened democratisation, a more sustained engagement with context and a heightened integration of constitutive elements. Conceivably, under certain circumstances, improved inter-departmental co-operation could produce each one of the aforementioned developments; however, it would, from the perspective that I advance, be a profound error to equate the two.

In this thesis, I break the comprehensive approach down into three dimensions. I want to establish how each of a specific liberal peacebuilding actor interprets and articulates each dimension. With a view to answering this question, I analyse how each dimension is articulated within key comprehensive approach documents. This will in turn enable me to assess how and to what extent the contradictions and tensions of liberal peacebuilding (which are set out in more detail in the Literature Review) are reconciled.

I aim to contest an established narrative of liberal peacebuilding which suggests a teleological progression that is achieved through the reconciliation of opposites. This reading equips liberal peacebuilding with a clear sense of momentum, anticipating a transgression of prior limitations and a movement towards a more complete, holistic or comprehensive approach.

It should be stressed that I do not question or challenge the proposition of a comprehensive approach. Its ontological basis is not a concern or preoccupation. Rather its existence is instead taken for granted, with a view to establishing how to what extent it succeeds in overcoming the tensions of liberal peacebuilding.

In drawing upon critical accounts and perspectives, my analysis is rooted within a prior understanding that the liberal peace is inherently conflictual in character. By virtue of the fact that tensions and contradictions are structurally rooted, liberal peacebuilding discourse can qualify, mitigate or understate, but cannot overcome them entirely. The essential task of a critical analysis is therefore to strip away constructions and facades, with a view to revealing the underlying reality.

As the Literature Review demonstrates in more detail, a number of important critical contributions trace the tensions and contradictions of liberal peacebuilding back to the prevailing neo-liberal order. For critical observers, liberal peacebuilding is more concerned with ensuring the reproduction of this order than with addressing human needs. From this perspective, the essential task of analysis is not to ensure a more complete reproduction but to strip away the façade and reveal the reality in its true dimensions. From this perspective, problem-solving approaches appear doomed to reproduce both tension and the

conditions of their own failure. Herein lies the significance of the initial question: liberal peacebuilding does not overcome or 'reconcile' conflicts but instead reproduces and reconfigures them.

Liberal peacebuilding is predicated upon a diametrically opposed understanding: by incorporating the comprehensive approach into their engagements with post-conflict contexts, peacebuilding actors will be able to 'reconcile' tensions. For these actors, the comprehensive approach is not only an aspiration to be achieved (see DfID, 2010b, MoD, 2009), but is already an observable feature, being manifested in both discourse and practice. In the Literature Review I demonstrate this by considering how 'narrow' frameworks of reference have been superseded by 'broadened' counterparts, a development evidenced by internal adjustments within each of the three component parts of post-conflict peacebuilding (democracy promotion, development and security).

Each one of these adjustments serves as an affirmation of the liberal optimism that is deeply imbued within liberal peacebuilding. It originates within liberal ideology (the belief that societal tension can be overcome through the advance of rationalism and reason), technocracy (in which the process of rationalisation incrementally absents contingency) and peace theory (which equates positive peace with the amelioration of tension and contradiction).

Liberalism, as the guiding ideology of the Enlightenment, reads human history as a teleological progression towards a previously suppressed reason, the concrete realisation of which will further embed 'progress' and 'rationality'. This ideological predisposition is also clearly evidenced in liberal encounters with violence: the liberal mindset is almost entirely incapable of comprehending the 'developed' and 'undeveloped', the 'civilised' and 'uncivilised' in anything other than binary opposition. Within this mindset there is a deeply rooted and persistent tendency to view violence as a pathology which is alien, external or antithetical to itself (Cramer 2006). Violence is not part of development or progress but is instead an aspect of the primordial, regressive and underdeveloped.

Cramer (2006) has suggested that this perspective highlights a clear blind spot within liberal ideology. He argues that, far from being diametrically opposed to liberal practices and forms, violence is instead imbued within development and the advancement of the modernist project (also see Moore

2000). David Chandler and Mark Duffield, both of whom have highlighted the tensions and contradictions that are inherent to the liberal world order, similarly question whether the liberal peace can resolve its own contradictions, let alone those of the objects to which it is directed. Liberal peacebuilding is, for these observers, tied up with various forms of discipline and regulation, being predisposed to functionalise or instrumentalise the contextual, the local and the specific (Richmond 2011, 14).

A substantial part of the debate of the liberal peace can be traced back to a more general debate about liberalism. Critical observers have suggested that the liberal project, far from being concerned with the realisation of individuality and heterogeneity, is in fact concerned with universalisation and rationalisation representing, in both respects, an essential imposition. The critique of the empirical record of liberal peacebuilding (see Paris 2010, 337) therefore overlaps with principled objections (e.g. to its technocratic character or its failure to sufficiently engage with local concerns and priorities).

In responding to these criticisms, liberal peacebuilding has found a source of reinvention within the comprehensive approach to conflict engagement and intervention. This is why, upon reading through policy documents, we so frequently encounter the proposition of a convergence upon three key innovations: firstly, a deepened or more substantive framework of democratic reference; secondly, a more sustained integration of context; and finally a more complete 'reconciliation' or integration of each constitutive element (democracy promotion, development and security).

Each of these three innovations precedes and sustains the proposition of a comprehensive approach. In asking how each dimension is reproduced at the level of the policy document, I propose to identify precisely how the application of a comprehensive approach framework has enabled a specific actor (the British government) to reconcile the tensions of liberal peacebuilding.

I will situate this question within a specific context; namely, critical contributions that have sought to present the liberal peace as rigid (Barkawi and Laffey 1999, 412) and internally contradictory (Barkawi and Laffey 1999, 424; Bickerton 2007, 93; De Guevara 2010, 116). Tension, for these observers, is something that is intrinsic to liberal peacebuilding. The proposition of a final reconciliation or enclosure is, from this perspective, an essentially ideological

assertion (see Chandler 2002 and 2006; Bickerton 2007) that has little or no grounding within the empirical reality of the liberal peace.

The issues that surround the general problematic of reconciliation can be more completely conceptualised with reference to the work of Roland Paris (2011). Although Paris treats liberal peacebuilding with considerable care and sympathy (indeed, his work could broadly be characterised as an attempt to salvage liberal peacebuilding from its internal contradictions. While he remains aware of the complications that accompany the project of reconciliation, he ultimately returns to the proposition that, through improved sequencing, liberal peacebuilding can iron out its tension and contradictions, ultimately graduating towards more integrated forms of conflict engagement and intervention.

In common with Paris, I propose to enlarge and apply this concept of 'tension', conceiving of it as the basis for a more sustained engagement with the general problematic of reconciliation. Precisely because there are so many tensions and contradictions associated with liberal peacebuilding, I propose to narrow down and focus upon three specific tensions. These are:

1. The tension between democratic engagement and managerial/technocratic oversight.
2. The tension between the 'internal' and the 'external'.
3. The tensions between democracy, development and security.

This thesis will consider how policy documents engage with, and overcome, each of these tensions. In the established narrative of the comprehensive approach, the first tension has been 'reconciled' by a deepened or more substantive form of democracy; the second by an acknowledgement of the 'internal', 'contextual' or 'local'; the third by a heightened engagement with the interlinkages which conjoin democracy, development and security.

In ostensibly reproducing each of these shifts, liberal peacebuilding appears, at first glance, to have refuted the insinuation that it is rigid, enclosed or inflexible. It appears to have undergone an internal reinvention, adapting itself in response to critical contributions and insights. This reinvention appears as the acknowledgement of three key axioms that have been incorporated into peacebuilding orthodoxy. These are:



1. That technocratic and top-down frameworks of engagement are inherently limited. Peacebuilding actors need to seek to engage local actors at all stages of the peacebuilding intervention, acting in accordance with a substantive model of democratic engagement in the process.
2. That solutions should not be conceived and applied across different contexts. General solutions will, by virtue of the fact that they are insufficiently rooted within the specificity of the individual context, ultimately only reproduce the conditions of their own failure. Local, regional and international actors should look to engage context at all stages of their intervention, thereby resisting the temptation to impose external perspectives.
3. In engaging in post-conflict context, peacebuilding actors should seek to integrate the different aspects of their intervention, ensuring that each component is mutually reinforcing. Actors concerned with democracy promotion, development and security should take care to ensure that their interventions are mutually reinforcing and ultimately defined in relation to a common purpose.

In integrating each of these lessons into their policy frameworks and procedures, peacebuilding actors have worked towards a more substantive model of democracy promotion, a heightened engagement with context and a more sustained integration of each constitutive elements of the peacebuilding ensemble.

I will ask how each of these lessons has been engaged and incorporated into key policy documents. I will not ask whether each dimension is present; rather, I will instead seek to engage with the various subtleties, ambiguities and nuances that accompany their textual reproduction. Once this is achieved, I will then provide an evaluation of the extent to which the initial tension has been reconciled.

In engaging at each of the three points, I seek to demonstrate that the three discursive shifts do not overcome the given tensions; rather, they are instead reproduced, albeit in mediated form. The discourse of liberal

peacebuilding, I suggest, ultimately reproduces the very same tensions that it ostensibly overcomes or reconciles.

To be more specific, my analysis of deepening will suggest, alongside the ascribed transition, the persistence of technocratic and managerial overtones. My discussion of contextuality will similarly highlight the recurrence of reiteration of externalised and generic reference points; finally, my analysis of complementarity will draw attention to instances in which democracy and development are incorporated upon differential terms. In each of these instances, my core contribution is to question the initial progression into question and insert a more nuanced or qualified counterpart in its place.

In the remainder of this introductory chapter I will set out the different components of my analytical framework. First of all, I will define the comprehensive approach and peacebuilding, thereby setting out my terms of reference from the outset. I will then justify my specific emphasis upon the British government before proceeding to set out my research question, contribution and approach.

## **The Comprehensive Approach: An Overview**

The general framework of a comprehensive approach is not, we should first recognise, distinctive to the peacebuilding field. NATO has called for a comprehensive approach to crises (2016) and the OECD sought, over the course of the 1990s, to achieve a more comprehensive approach to development. Comprehensiveness is therefore a broadly shared agenda that cuts across policy firewalls, providing an explanation of past failures and an anticipation of future successes. Comprehensiveness functions as a generally acknowledged ‘truth’ which inculcates a certain style of thought and practice, representing a progression beyond prior limitations (see Smith 2004, 56 and Chopra and Hohe 2004, 253).

The comprehensive approach is perhaps most appropriately described as a policy axiom, an article of policy truth made to function. Gawerc traces the comprehensive approach back to a general ‘consensus within the peacebuilding field’ which holds that ‘a peace process is more likely to succeed and be sustainable if it is comprehensive and accompanied by multi-track diplomacy and public involvement’ (2006, 442). Gawerc therefore makes two

significant contributions: firstly, she establishes that the comprehensive approach is a convergence upon a particular policy prescription; secondly, she situates the comprehensive approach within a wider process of institutional learning (also see OECD 1997; Pugh 2004, 39; Bellamy 2004, Gawerc 2006 and Ahmed 2007) which has produced a 'new understanding of the concept of peace and security' (UN 2001).

In operating within the parameters established by this 'new understanding' practitioners liberate themselves from the suffocating confines of technocratic frameworks. Paris (2002) therefore invokes an established consensus when he criticises the belief that peacebuilding interventions are essentially 'technical (or non-ideological) exercise[s] in conflict management'. David Chandler, striking a similarly strong note of disapproval, references instances in which 'Western states and international institutions reinterpret economic, social and political problems in other parts of the world as questions which are largely amenable to technical administrative solutions' (2006, 7).

Within the peacebuilding field, the wider project of comprehensiveness first began to attain increased prominence and importance with the publication of the hugely influential UN report, *An Agenda for Peace: Preventive diplomacy, Peacemaking and Peacekeeping*, in 1992. This report anticipated a fundamental overhaul of the established system of global governance. It did not therefore seek to reproduce the established institutions and practices of the international system. Quite the contrary, it sought to invert the Westphalian state order (see Duffield 2003, 291; Newman et al (2009, 7) and established novel governance structures and arrangements.

In the post-Cold War, the divide between the internal and the external no longer functioned as the basis of international order. Rather, the impact of intra-state conflicts upon the international system instead contributed to a wide recognition that this distinction could, in the interests of international peace and security, no longer be sustained. Emerging challenges necessitated new tools and instruments that could help to consolidate the international liberal order – post-conflict peacebuilding and development were both key instruments in this respect. In acknowledging the growing strategic significance of development, Duffield invoked a 'technology of security that is central to liberal forms of power and government' (2007, preface, VII).

Here Duffield successfully captures the ways in which liberal technologies of government, which are ostensibly concerned with the creation of various freedoms, are closely bound up with external surveillance and management. These technologies work through and within local agents, thus reinforcing and strengthening the broader apparatus of liberal governance. They do not exert direct control or coercion, but instead imply more subtle forms of management and oversight.

In highlighting how the development and security agendas have coalesced, Duffield demonstrates how development has become securitised and directed towards the consolidation of the established status quo. This provides a critical reading of a trend that *An Agenda for Peace* had described in more depth. Equally significantly, this document also introduced readers to two key concepts: the comprehensive approach and post-conflict peacebuilding. In their subsequent usage by international actors the two concepts came to be used interchangeably, in a way that furthered the impression that they were synonymous and even tautological (a comprehensive approach to questions of peace and insecurity implied peacebuilding; peacebuilding appeared as a comprehensive approach).

As the 1990s progressed, both concepts began to seep into the operational frameworks and working practices of national, regional and international actors. Increasingly economic institutions, such as the OECD (refer to the work of its Task Force on Conflict, Peace and Development Co-operation) and the World Bank came to engage with the challenges and complexities of statebuilding and peacebuilding. At the domestic level, state actors also sought to integrate their approaches. Decompartmentalisation – the need for government departments to break down ‘firewalls’ and work across each other (Smith 2004, 33) – asserted itself as an increasingly pressing imperative, being enacted in a range of bureaucratic contexts.

The ‘comprehensive approach’ therefore originally emerged in a policy context, being conceived as the basis for more integrated and cohesive approaches to conflict intervention. However, it has, by virtue of the cross-fertilisation of the academic and policy fields, become a feature of the general peacebuilding literature. It is therefore relatively straightforward to find allusions to the comprehensive approach within the peacebuilding literature. Gawerc, for

instance, invokes a 'relatively new interest in comprehensive, multi-dimensional and multi-track approaches'. She makes the important observation that this interest did not emerge randomly or in isolation from broader developments; rather it derived from the 'limited success of traditional diplomacy and military intervention[s]', which clearly evidenced a limited capacity to 'to control protracted conflicts, let alone achieve peace' (2006, 440).

This provides us with an important insight into the emergence and development of the comprehensive approach. It emerged from a collaborative exercise of institutional learning, which was clearly directed towards the inadequacies and limitations of established techniques of conflict engagement. Peacebuilding initially emerged as part of this agenda because it was understood to provide a more 'comprehensive' framework of conflict engagement. This explains why Gawerc (2006) and Ahmed et al (2007) present it as a progression from its immediate predecessor (peacekeeping).

This process of institutional learning did not occur in isolation, but was instead framed against the broader context of the so-called 'new' wars. These conflicts necessitated new techniques and practices precisely because they were irrational (initiated or sustained by ethnic/religious identities), diverged from conventional expectations and impacted upon regional and international security (Helman and Ratner 1992) (Rice 2003) (Rubin 2005). To put it slightly differently, the comprehensive approach arose as a responsive adaptation to a 'new breed' of warfare, state breakdown and complex political emergencies (European Commission 1997, 25).

## **Post-Conflict Peacebuilding: Theory and Practice**

The term 'post-conflict peacebuilding' describes interventions in the aftermath of violent conflict which are addressed to the underlying causes of violent conflict. In *An Agenda for Peace* (1992), which is often cited as the point at which the concept began to assume a broader significance, Boutros Boutros-Ghali, the then UN-Secretary General, defined post-conflict peacebuilding as 'action to identify and support structures which will tend to strengthen and solidify peace in order to prevent a relapse into conflict'. The OECD defines peacebuilding as 'activities designed to prevent conflict through addressing structural and proximate causes of violence, promoting sustainable peace,

delegitimising violence as a dispute resolution strategy'. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), meanwhile, defines peacebuilding as 'a range of measures targeted to reduce the risk of lapsing or relapsing into conflict by strengthening national capacities at all levels for conflict management, and laying the foundations for sustainable peace and development' (Alliance for Peacebuilding 2013).

It is important to recognise that the practice of post-conflict peacebuilding (which developed in the post-Cold War era) was substantially preceded by both peace theory and the associated field of peace studies. The word 'peacebuilding' can itself be traced back to Johan Galtung's *Three Approaches to Peace: Peacekeeping, Peacemaking and Peacebuilding*, which was initially published in 1975.

In contrast, it was only with the end of the Cold War that post-conflict peacebuilding began to become a significant practice within the international system. Up until this point, the political exigencies of the Cold War had restricted its use and implementation; there were very few instances, prior to 1989, in which the UN had operated under a peacebuilding mandate. Largely due to the political divides of the Cold War, peacekeeping provided the main means of international engagement with conflict theatres. However, this was to change with the publication of *An Agenda for Peace* in 1992; this document made it clear that post-conflict peacebuilding would come to play a considerably larger and more prominent role in the post-Cold War era.

As the Literature Review establishes in more depth and detail, this was as much a response to rapidly changing circumstances: the post-Cold War era had been inaugurated by a series of brutal and intense intra-state conflicts, which presented a clear challenge to international order. As the 1990s progressed, the UN oversaw (whether as the lead or delegating agency) a broad number of post-conflict interventions within a diverse range of settings. The practice of post-conflict peacebuilding rapidly became established as a core and integral feature of the post-Cold War political environment. While the UN played a pre-eminent role in the development of this practice, a range of other agencies and actors contributed to the evolving and developing practice of post-conflict peacebuilding.

However, it is important to recognise that these practical innovations were substantially proceeded, and to some extent anticipated by, an established body of peace theory (Gawerc 2006, 438). Hugely influential contributions from John Burton, who proposed that conflict arose in the denial of fundamental human needs; Johan Galtung, who advanced a structural analysis of violent conflict, and John Paul Lederach provided the basis for a theoretical framework which addressed the underlying causes, as opposed to proximate effects, of violent conflict (see Fetherston 2007, 202-203). Each of these authors argued in favour of an approach that was premised upon the principles of 'positive peace', which is distinguished from its negative counterpart upon the basis that it is not solely concerned with the mitigation or absencing of violent conflict (see Berdal 2009; Barnett et al 2007, 44; UN 2001; Keating and Knight 2004, xxxiv). Positive peace can further be distinguished from 'negative peace' upon the basis that the former equates 'peace' with the realisation of fundamental human needs; in contrast, the latter defines 'peace' as the absence of violence (Haugerudbraaten 1998).

Peace theory does not constrict democracy to specific processes, structures of institutions, but instead posits an open-ended process that is undermined and which is defined in the process of its implementation. Bertram therefore asserts that peace is 'an indigenous product, the outcome of hard-fought battles among local groups' (1995, 405). Gawerc provides further insight when she observes that 'solutions must be adopted by local actors and [cannot] be forced from above or imposed from the outside' (2006, 441). Accordingly, 'each country must develop the approach that suits its particular circumstances' (World Bank 1990, 14). Each of these contributions clearly establishes an account of democracy that is open-ended, that is sensitive to context and which is defined by local actors.

This imposes clear limitations upon external actors, whose role is not to promote specific practices or attributes but is instead to initiate a process that will enable local actors to take the lead in the democratisation process. Kenneth Bush reiterates that the essential concern of peacebuilding is: 'To encourage the creation of the political, economic, and social space, within which indigenous actors can identify, develop and employ the resources necessary to build a peaceful, prosperous and just society' (Keating and Knight 2004, xxxvi).

Peacebuilding theory therefore closely resembles participatory development (DfID 1997, 37), with local actors being empowered to utilise the tools and techniques that will enable them to challenge established distributions of power.

In emphasising the need to alter prevailing social conditions, peace theory is transformative in character and intent. MacGinty and Richmond reiterate that '[c]onflict transformation is not content with elite-level peace agreements, and instead drills down to address the identities, attitudes and education systems that underpin conflict' (2013, 771). In contrast to peacekeeping, which is preoccupied with the management of violence, peace theory is therefore concerned with engaging and altering established structures of violence (see Azar 1986, 38; Keating and Knight 2004, xxxiv; Jabri 2013, 9). Peacebuilding can thus be theorised as a progression beyond peacekeeping: it does not seek to control or mitigate violent conflict but instead penetrates to its foundations and transforms prevailing social conditions.

Peace theory is therefore premised upon the understanding that violence is essentially a symptom which derives from underlying pathologies (see UNDP 2001, 13; Azar 1986, 28). Peace theory is distinguished from reconstruction upon the basis that it does not seek to restore the status quo ante. In further reiterating this point, Richmond and MacGinty clearly distinguish between conflict management, resolution and transformation (2013, 771), differentiating transformation upon the grounds that it 'stresses a clear normative commitment to the transformation of social conditions and 'the empowerment of the unorganised, the poor [and] the marginalised' (UN, 1992). Peace theory envisages an 'emancipatory project', which is situated within a broader body of 'emancipatory peace research' (Patomäki 2001, 724, 727) and which seeks to 'emancipate humanity from unnecessary violence' (Patomäki 2001, 731).

While peacebuilding theory ultimately flowered into the interdisciplinary field of Peace Studies, peacebuilding practice remained comparatively underdeveloped and emaciated until the post-Cold War era, when a range of institutional actors began to develop post-conflict intervention capabilities. The World Bank's development of a post-conflict unit and the heightened importance of the Economic and Social Council within the UN institutional apparatus were both important developments in this respect. Over the course of the 1990s, the relative balance between theory and practice would again shift.



Far from being guided by a body of theory, practical peacebuilding interventions during the early-mid 1990s instead appeared to more closely resemble a series of ad hoc improvisations, which were insufficiently adjusted to the challenges encountered within post-conflict theatres (see Benner and Rotmann 2008, 44).

## **Research Focus: The British Government**

For the purposes of the current analysis of the comprehensive approach to peacebuilding, it would be productive to engage with a state actor that played a leading role in integrating development approaches into its conflict-engagement frameworks and which played a foremost role in the development of non-traditional (e.g. non-military) approaches to security challenges. In addition, this actor's contribution to both of these fields of innovation should be internationally recognised and acknowledged.

The British government meets each of these requirements. In the years since it was founded in 1997, the Department for International Development (DfID) has proactively illustrated how development practices and techniques can be applied to the challenges of conflict engagement. Its contributions in this respect have been particularly important because it has helped to break with the belief that development begins at the point where violent conflict ends. In illustrating how development can make an active contribution to peacebuilding, the DfID has contributed to the emergence of a new orthodoxy.

To the same extent, the British government, and again the DfID's contribution should be recognised in this respect, is a particularly instructive point of engagement because its contribution to the development of innovative, flexible and adaptive approaches to conflict intervention has been internationally recognised. Its contribution to international forums and discussions further reiterates the British government's role in helping to elevate and sustain the agenda of the comprehensive approach.

The election of the New Labour government brought to power a government with a clear international agenda. In the following years, the DfID emerged as a standard-bearer for sophisticated, integrated and broad-ranging responses to the challenges of underdevelopment and violent conflict. In contributing to broader debates and adopting a leading international role, the

British government played a leading role in helping to challenge and alter established security and development agendas.

However, it should be noted that both the comprehensive approach and post-conflict peacebuilding initially developed within a different context, namely the United Nations (UN). As the leading international authority for questions pertaining to international security, the UN initially established the basis for the development of both the comprehensive approach and post-conflict peacebuilding. The two concepts originated within the UN framework, and this provided the basis upon which national and regional actors could then integrate both reference points into their conflict engagement strategies and practices. The UN also played the leading role in the development and application of the practice of post-conflict peacebuilding – its pre-eminence in this respect is further underlined by the number of academic studies that focus upon its role.

The early-mid 1990s coincided with several key and important shifts within the international system. The bipolar system had given way to the uncertainties of the post-Cold War era. This presented both new challenges and new opportunities. In the latter sense, questions of peace and security became subject to a fundamental reconceptualization – it was during this period that concepts such as ‘human security’ and ‘positive peace’ began to become popularised and integrated into policy frameworks and structures (OECD, 1995). Similarly, a series of UN conferences held during the early-mid 1990s also established a radical and emancipatory agenda centred upon human rights, gender equality and the environment. The Millennium Development Goals emerged from this process and established the basis for a new development agenda.

The emerging consensus on development fed into a broader consensus, which held that the problems of security, development and governance were essentially interconnected and interrelated. Development could, by implication, not be engaged as a sectoral or technical concern. Insecurity was not therefore a problem that could be resolved by technical specialists or expertise; rather it instead necessitated a broader analysis, which would be able to simultaneously engage the economic, political and social drivers of instability.

In engaging with the textual output of the British government, I will attempt to identify how this broad-ranging agenda and set of preoccupations

was engaged and incorporated by a specific national-level actor. This is particularly important because national-level studies of post-conflict remain, in contrast to studies focused upon the UN and EU, relatively underdeveloped. In making an additional contribution to the academic study of peacebuilding, I therefore seek to demonstrate that the national level can be an equally instructive and fruitful point of engagement.

## **Research Question**

*How and to What Extent Does the British Government's Comprehensive Approach to Post-Conflict Peacebuilding Reconcile the Discursive Tensions and Contradictions of Liberal Peacebuilding?*

The first sub-section of this chapter has already engaged with the central research question in some detail, and therefore established the basis for a research thesis which engages with two separate questions. The 'how' of the above research question is essentially the identification of the discursive techniques, strategies and manoeuvres that enable the comprehensive approach to overcome or reconcile the tensions of liberal peacebuilding. The essential premise at this point is that the comprehensive approach does reconcile tensions and that the central concern is to identify precisely how it achieves this.

The second part of the question is very different – it instead requires a closer engagement with the question of extent – the degree to which the comprehensive approach overcomes tensions and contradictions. This instead suggests a different order of analysis – that is, with tensions that reoccur or which are reiterated at the level of the text. In contrast to the first part of the question, 'extent' requires analysis.

Both parts of the question relate to reconciliation – that is, to its possibilities, limitations and constraints. This question is open-ended, and although I approach it from within a critical perspective, I do not seek to predetermine the form of reconciliation or make any definitive judgements as to its conditions of possibility. I accept that, even in the absence of an observed discursive reconciliation, it could conceivably be achieved under different circumstances and in different instances. I do not therefore begin with the proposition that tensions or contradictions cannot be reconciled or overcome.

Ultimately, I proceed upon the basis of the understanding that both dimensions of the question can only be resolved with reference to the text.

The third chapter sets out how I intend to apply the comprehensive approach framework. It breaks this framework down into three components (deepening, contextuality and complementarity) and then uses each of these components to identify relevant texts. It develops Lene Hansen's approach to discourse analysis and demonstrates how her contribution can establish the basis for a critical analysis of each text. The tables within this chapter set out the progression of each stage of my analysis and also identify the core texts that will be engaged by the following three empirical chapters.

## **Research Contribution**

My thesis is an important contribution to the research literature because it is concerned with the discursive structuring of peacebuilding. A considerable part of the literature – both problem-solving and critical – is concerned with the question of how contradictions and tensions are evidenced in material practice. It is therefore relatively straightforward to find case studies of specific interventions or studies that seek to apply general lessons to the practice of post-conflict peacebuilding. Chandler explicitly reiterates this point when he refers to the proliferation of 'empirical case studies [focused upon] fairly generic and idealistic sets of policy recommendations' (2006, 189). By implication, empirical practice has tended to predominate the discussion of peacebuilding. In large part, this is a reflection of the fact that peacebuilding has been predominantly conceived and approached as a practical project, that is with a view to identifying and applying practical solutions.

In comparison, it is noticeable that far fewer contributions focus upon the role of peacebuilding discourse. This is a particularly important oversight because, as my own research reiterates, discourse essentially structures practice, and sets out its limits and possibilities. In engaging with discourse, I propose to take a 'step back' from practice and to engage at an essentially prior level of analysis. In consciously breaking with the fetishisation of practice, I seek to demonstrate that tensions and contradictions are evidenced at a prior level of analysis and that the essential question is not simply to achieve a fuller reconciliation in practice. I therefore suggest that it is necessary to critically

interrogate the basis of this comprehensive approach rather than to ask how it can be materially manifested in practice.

In focusing upon the material practice, observers invariably abstract from the ideal and seek to establish the extent to which the practice approximates to this prior template. A considerable part of the critical literature is therefore concerned with demonstrating the extent to which the 'actual' does not correspond to the ideal. This, I would argue, misses an essential and important question – namely the discursive processes which generate concepts such as 'democracy' and 'context'. In engaging at this point, I propose to identify the form in which both concepts are reproduced within key texts. In many instances, I argue, it is the case that the tensions and contradictions of this discourse are reproduced in subsequent effect.

The break with practice is also significant because it enables me to diverge from an associated assumption – namely that analysis should begin, almost as a prior condition, with the actor that has played a central role in the development of the practice of post-conflict peacebuilding. In applying this assumption, a number of research engagements therefore orientate, as if under the influence of a gravitational pull, towards the UN. In comparison, far less research has focused upon national-level actors and their engagement with the peacebuilding agenda. This is an important oversight because it fails to acknowledge the contribution that national-level actors have made to debates pertaining to both post-conflict peacebuilding and the comprehensive approach.

This thesis is also an important contribution to the critical literature because it questions or challenges normatively loaded concepts such as 'democracy' and 'context'. In reiterating the ways in which both concepts can become incorporated into wider power structures, this thesis insists, in a characteristically Foucauldian way, upon an analysis grounded within the ubiquity of power relations. It achieves this by highlighting the ways in which the transformative and emancipatory components of the liberal peace are reformulated and aligned with wider neo-liberal imperatives. In suggesting that concepts such as 'democratisation' and 'context' are intelligible in their relation to this wider context, it directly challenges the premise – which is naively reproduced within parts of the critical literature – that they can be conceived in opposition to power.

Although this thesis is distinguished by its emphasis upon its emphasis upon discourse, I understand it to be a contribution to a broader critical project. This project seeks to highlight, question and challenges the biases and distortions that have become deeply interwoven into liberal peacebuilding. It begins, in common with this wider project, with an abrupt rejection of the premise that ‘problems must be solved rather than solutions problematised’ (Heathershaw and Lambach 2008, 275; also see Pugh 2004, 39). It is similarly predisposed to reject the proposition that peacebuilding should be synonymous with the ‘spread of technocracy, the professionalisation of staff, the promotion of “best practice” and the spread of common conflict analysis frameworks’ (Richmond and MacGinty 2013, 777). Quite the contrary – it instead views standardisation, bureaucratisation (Goetschel and Hagmann 2009) and professionalization (Sabaratnam 2011, 17) as sources of concern and trepidation.

In deliberately and consciously breaking with the policy imperative – that is, an unthinking repetition of the norms and conventions of the policy sphere, my contribution – in common with the wider critical project of which it is part – originates within a concern that the peacebuilding field has become far too closely intertwined, to the point where it almost appears to be indistinguishable from, the concerns and preoccupations of policy-makers. When perceived from this vantage-point, lesson learning, project evaluation and best practice frameworks do not appear as the harbingers and embodiment of a more fully realised policy wisdom but rather as mechanisms which threaten to ‘deepen and extend the power of Liberal governance’ (Duffield 2001, 260).

In critically engaging with the root underpinning assumptions of liberal peacebuilding, this research seeks to provide the basis for further research that destabilises received policy wisdoms and truths. In ideal circumstances, this research would challenge or disrupt the grounding epistemology of liberal peacebuilding, opening up space for research that seeks to implicate this individual and specific practice within wider power complexes and networks. In common with Roland Paris (2000), this research would begin with the proposition that the focus upon practical implementation ultimately represents a narrowing or delimitation of the terms of reference. It would extend and

operationalise the proposition that it is imperative to 'broaden' the study of peace operations (see Hameiri 2010, 11; Duffield 2001, 28).

In my own account, this 'broadening' extends analysis to the assumptions that underpin liberal peacebuilding. It focuses in upon the fact that liberal peacebuilders have unquestioningly internalised the proposition of an incremental progression towards a comprehensive approach. This has assumed the status of a policy axiom. In questioning and probing this article of truth, I propose to further develop develop Bellamy's proposition that it is necessary to question 'significant normative assumptions that are left unexplored' (Bellamy 2004, 19).

My thesis therefore originates within the understanding that there is a clear need to 'expose and problematise the ideas and practices that underpin dominant approaches to peace operations' (Bellamy 2004, 31). It seeks to unsettle deeply rooted or 'sedimented' assumptions (Dreyfus and Rabinow 1982, 196; Paris 1997, 55; Haugerudbraaten 1998) by applying a critical analysis to unspoken, implicit or essentially prior assumptions (see Richmond 2011, 58).

In enabling the framework of the comprehensive approach to be applied as a critical tool of enquiry, rather than as a policy imperative to be further unravelled, this thesis provides a basis upon which future research can engage with the conceptual limitations and constraints of liberal peacebuilding. The three dimensions of the comprehensive approach can therefore be transferred to other contexts, potentially being applied to other manifestations of peacebuilding policy at the national, regional or international level.

My research provides an analysis fixated upon text and its various potentialities and limitations. My analysis further helps to orientate the discussion away from the material practice of peacebuilding and instead directs attention towards the question of how discourse is structured and arranged. This is a particularly important contribution because it reiterates that the essential concern is not to focus upon the material reproduction of an idealised form (e.g. of democracy or context) but rather to identify precisely how this form is reproduced and, to borrow an expression of Foucault's, made to function.

## Research Summary

This thesis provides a critical analysis of the discursive structuring of core policy documents. It engages with the underpinning assumptions of the comprehensive approach to peacebuilding and seeks to provide a reading that problematises deeply ingrained normative assumptions. It directly opposes liberal assumptions by adopting a Foucauldian framework of analysis, which teases out tensions, contradictions and divergences. The Literature Review establishes the basis for a general critical analysis by demonstrating how critical perspectives have emerged in response to the limitations and constraints of liberal peacebuilding. This chapter identifies core contradictions and tensions while demonstrating the essential contribution of critical perspectives. The third and fourth chapters of this thesis establish the theoretical and empirical basis for a critical engagement with core policy documents. The third chapter develops core theoretical concepts and themes whereas the fourth chapter demonstrates how the comprehensive approach can be developed and applied.

In asking how I could challenge and contest the grounding assumptions of liberal peacebuilding, I found Foucauldian perspectives to be of particular utility: they enabled me to question and challenge grounding assumption by inverting core binary oppositions (freedom in opposition, knowledge in opposition to power) and also helped me to develop a more sophisticated analysis of power and freedom. In refusing to situate the two reference points in opposition to each other, Foucault established the basis for a critical interrogation of liberal technologies of government, which are operationalised through and within different conditions and attributes of freedom. A closer engagement with liberal technologies of government accustoms us to the insight that, far from functioning as the point at which power is refused, freedom more frequently operates as the means through it is manifested and concretely put into effect.

My approach to discourse is also grounded within a Foucauldian framework. Although I would not define my analysis as a discourse analysis (this implies a more precise, exact and systematic framework than the one I actually apply) it does, in the process of developing a critical reading, draw upon a number of the underlying principles of discourse analysis. It adapts the work of Lene Hansen, an International Relations theorist whose work can be



broadly categorised as Foucauldian or post-structuralist. I then adapt this framework of reference and seek to integrate it into my analysis of policy documents. In addition to providing underpinning principles, Hansen also offers some important insights which have implications for textual selection, the period of engagement and the objects of analysis.

The comprehensive approach is broken down into three separate components: deepening, contextuality and complementarity. Policy actors would not explicitly recognise or use these terms, but would register their meaning at an unconscious level of analysis. In explicitly articulating their underlying meaning, I establish an analytical framework that can be applied to policy texts, thereby establishing the basis for a critical analysis of the discursive structuring of policy documents. The fourth chapter, in engaging with each dimension in more depth and detail, demonstrates how the framework of the comprehensive approach can be empirically applied and developed.

I will then identify specific policy documents, asking how they reproduce deepening, contextuality and complementarity. I then propose to explore precisely how reconciliation is achieved within each of the given texts. I approach the texts from a critical perspective, directing my critical analysis to points of enclosure that are contingent, unstable or mutually contradictory. In concluding, I summarise my main observations, link the discussion back to the theory chapter and the literature review and suggest points that could be fruitfully engaged by future research.

## Chapter One

# Literature Review: Bringing in Critical Perspectives

### Introduction

As this chapter seeks to illustrate, far from embodying the point at which a more complete reconciliation is attained, realised and put into effect, liberal peacebuilding should instead be conceived and approached as a deeply conflicted object of reference which is both internally conflicted and afflicted by perpetual tensions between its theory and practice.

The essential contribution of this chapter is therefore to demonstrate the scope, significance and implications of these tensions. Important work has already been done in this respect: Bickerton (2007) has, for example, previously highlighted how statebuilding practices frequently both invoke and undermine the principle of sovereignty; Chandler (2006), in highlighting the tension between the stated objectives and actual outcomes of post-conflict intervention, examines instances in which external actors have reproduced the very weaknesses that they have ostensibly sought to address; and Cramer (2006), in demonstrating the forms of violence that are inherent to liberalism, highlights a clear tension between the ideological and empirical components of the 'Liberal Peace'.

In highlighting contradictions and tensions that are deeply rooted within the liberal peace, each of these contributions establishes a clear agenda for this chapter. In this chapter I work towards the understanding that tension is not an unfortunate or contingent consequence of peacebuilding but instead suggest that, far from overcoming tensions, liberal peacebuilding just as frequently reproduces them in subsequent effect (Bickerton 2007).

In engaging with these contradictions, I structure this chapter around Bellamy's distinction between problem-solving and critical approaches (2004). Whereas the former seeks to reproduce liberal assumptions, the latter seeks to interpolate the liberal peace within wider power relations. David Mosse has drawn a very similar distinction between problem-solving approaches, which are premised upon 'rational problem solving', and critical approaches, which instead challenge 'rationalising technical discourse [that conceal] hidden purposes of bureaucratic power or dominance' (2004, 2). This chapter is arranged around

this distinction. I initially engage the context in which post-conflict peacebuilding emerged; I then discuss its constitutive components, and finally I highlight some of the central themes and concerns of liberal peacebuilding. I will then proceed to engage with perspectives that challenge the grounding premises of the liberal peace.

Although I repeatedly distinguish between the two branches of the literature, I do so with an acknowledgement that it is equally important to remain aware of their interaction and interrelation. From my perspective as a researcher, one of the most interesting questions is how liberal peacebuilding has progressed and developed – this is a preoccupation that is clearly prefigured by, and embodied within, the initial research question.

In addition to the problem-solving/critical divide and a clear sense of progression and evolution, the breadth of the peacebuilding literature can also be said to be another of its defining attributes. Development economists, anthropologists, sociologists and political scientists have all influenced the field, making important and invaluable contributions in the process. While the sheer breadth of the literature is clearly to be welcomed it has been, for purposes of parsimony and thematic coherence, to omit or overlook a number of points of potential engagement. This chapter does not therefore engage with the peace studies literature or with the conflict resolution literature; to the same extent, it does not concern itself with case studies of specific interventions.

In this chapter I will begin by discussing the broader contextual background, the ‘framing’ of peacebuilding discourse and practice. This part of the discussion will focus upon the UN and the so-called ‘new wars’. The UN is a particularly important point of reference because, as observed in the introductory chapter, it played a pre-eminent role in the development of post-conflict peacebuilding. The so-called ‘new wars’ were particularly important in this respect because they provided the initial impetus for the development of an architecture of external engagement, intervention and mediation.

Precisely the same could be said of the comprehensive approach. As the introductory chapter has already identified, the comprehensive approach to post-conflict peacebuilding emerged as a responsive adaptation to structural shifts within the international system. The emergence of a distinctively ‘new’ form of war necessitated new practices and techniques of conflict intervention.

Both the comprehensive approach and post-conflict peacebuilding therefore emerged within a context of a broader debate which sought to engage problems of external intervention; specifically, the point at which external intervention should be undertaken, the means through which it should be practiced and the structures and processes that should be put into place in its aftermath. In my discussion of both innovations, I will primarily engage with the academic literature, although reference will also be made to relevant policy documents.

A discussion of the UN and the new wars helps us to understand how and why a comprehensive approach emerged. *The Components of Post-Conflict Peacebuilding: Governance, Development and Security* identifies the key referent objects. It sets out each individual component of a 'Holy Trinity' (democracy promotion, development and security) and explains how they have become, through the influence of the comprehensive approach, subject to a deepening and broadening. In engaging at each point, I register and acknowledge the progression from a 'narrow' to a 'broad' framework of reference. Democracy, development and security are not therefore engaged as static forms, as the distilled embodiment of an essence, but are instead conceived and engaged in their progression.

After initially establishing the key features of post-conflict peacebuilding, I then seek to unpack liberal peacebuilding, with specific attention to its ideological and technocratic components. The second part of the review then engages with critical perspectives. In the first part of the review my attention is focused upon the components and attributes of the 'liberal peace'. For unreflective practitioners, the essential question is not what peacebuilding is (this is implicitly assumed) or how it functions within a broader context (this is unrelated to the immediate terms of reference), but rather how this framework can be more effectively implemented or realised. In fixating upon implementation, these actors blind themselves to a whole range of fascinating and thought-provoking questions and fail to acknowledge the clear need to broaden the study of peace operations (Paris 2000).

Aside from being engaged with very different questions, problem-solving and critical approaches also orientate towards very different points of engagement. Problem-solving approaches proceed from a specific set of assumptions to ask how they can be more fully embodied or reproduced.

Critical approaches, in contrast, seek to return to prior assumptions and to uncover deeply internalised assumptions and predispositions that may lie at the root of the problem. In failing to do this, liberal peacebuilding leaves itself open to the accusation that it reproduces its own tensions and contradictions in subsequent effect.

In contrast to liberal problem-solving perspectives, which view tension and contradiction as a challenge to be overcome and as the incitement of ameliorative correctives, critical perspectives instead seek to unravel tension to its full implication and significance. This echoes Marxism's anticipation of a future society within the tensions, contradictions and dissonances of capitalism. The topic 'Critical Perspectives' heralds the second part of the review. It breaks down into three sub-sections. First of all, Critical Perspectives: Disciplinary Liberalism directly inverts one of the central articles of liberal faith by highlighting the ways in which economic integration can exacerbate and intensify conflict dynamics. Critical Perspectives: Critical Engagements with Statebuilding then demonstrates how the formalised state-building frameworks become, when transferred to post-conflict contexts, subject to various forms of subversion, reconfiguration and even inversion. Critical Perspectives: Engaging with Complexity similarly examines how the tensions and contradictions of the post-conflict context distort the smooth linearities and regularities of liberal peacebuilding beyond recognition. By engaging at each of these points, I demonstrate that analysis should not begin with abstract templates but should instead begin from a prior anticipation of contingency, subversion and volatility. The conclusion then brings the overall discussion together and leads into the following Foucauldian chapter.

## **Post-Conflict Peacebuilding and Liberal Peacebuilding**

### **1. The Broader Context: UN Post-Conflict Peacebuilding and the New Wars**

During the Cold War, the UN's ability to uphold its international mandate was severely limited by political exigencies. This meant that its interventions were largely confined to limited forms of peacekeeping. Peacekeeping is essentially a form of conflict management; it does not attempt to resolve underlying causes or drivers, but instead attempts to mitigate the worst

consequences. The prospect of a more ambitious approach began to gather momentum in the early 1990s, when the inauguration of a 'new world order' raised hopes that the UN might be poised to realise the hopes and expectations which had been invested in it more than 50 year earlier. These hopes were further raised when, in the early 1990s, the organisation oversaw practical interventions within a diverse range of post-conflict settings, including Cambodia, El Salvador, Mozambique and Namibia.

Practical intervention proceeded far in advance of conceptual and theoretical consolidation. In reflecting upon this development, Ahmed et al observed that, in the early 1990s, quantitative growth in activity far outstripped qualitative reflection (2007, 12). From its inception, post-conflict peacebuilding appeared to be an inherently practical or 'pragmatic' concern which remained under-theorised. Questions such as the significance of the practice, its relation to preponderant interests within the international system and its broader implications remained, at least during these initial years, under-explored.

Many of these initial interventions were therefore essentially ad hoc in character, and the development of doctrinal and theoretical bases were subsequent to the emergence of a practice of peacebuilding. This slowly began to change when a Political Affairs Department, Peacebuilding Commission and Peacebuilding Support Office (PBSO) established the basis for improved responsive capabilities (Diehl et al 1996; Ahmed et al 2007). These institutional reforms provided the centre for a range of impressive practical innovations (Chopra 2000; Dobbins et al 2004). Ammitzbøll and Torjesen (2007; also see UN 2006) documented the democratisation of the organisation's peacebuilding practices and frameworks of engagement. At the same time, the organisation developed its ability to undertake multifunctional peace operations (Chesterman 2004). However, these developments, while important and significant, were not straightforward or uncomplicated, and a number of observers (Richmond 2004; Zanotti 2006; Berdal and Economides 2007) have sought to draw attention to associated contradictions, constraints and limitations.

In addition to improving a basis upon which practical peacebuilding interventions could be undertaken, the UN also played an invaluable role in defining the terms of the post-Cold War agenda. A series of reports that the organisation published over the course of the 1990s made a crucial contribution

in this respect. These reports traversed a number of levels (subnational, national and transnational), highlighted different dimensions of conflict (economic, political and social) and engaged different phases of the conflict intervention cycle (extending from preventative to post-conflict phases).

*An Agenda for Peace* (1992) captured the dynamism and flux of the rapidly shifting security environment. It introduced the concept of post-conflict peacebuilding and thereby established the basis for a more sustained engagement with the structural or 'root' causes of political violence (UN 1995). The report stressed that institutional reform was a necessary response to a 'new breed' of conflict and reiterated that post-conflict peacebuilding was essentially a response to objective changes within the nature of war. Ammitzbøll and Torjesen echoed this point when they suggested that the new wars necessitated workable, comprehensive and integrated strategies of conflict intervention.

Associated fears and prejudices found expression within contributions from Samuel Huntingdon (*The Clash of Civilisations*), Robert Kaplan (*The Coming Anarchy*) and Michael Ignatieff (*Blood and Belonging*). Each writer successfully tapped into the zeitgeist by furthering the impression that the global hinterlands were regressing to a state characterised by irrational and primordial hatreds. These concerns were lent an added air of intensity by the perception that the international community was poorly placed to contain the consequences of violent conflict. Peacekeeping, which previously functioned as the predominant mode of international engagement with conflict theatres, was dwarfed by the scale of the challenges which now confronted the international system.

State breakdown, regional destabilisation and mass population movements all posed a clear and immediate threat to the stability of the international system. In reflecting upon these challenges, Kofi Annan, the former UN Secretary-General, observed that the multi-faceted character of 'complex political emergencies' necessitated 'co-operation across a range of different agencies and departments' (UN 2000). Post-conflict peacebuilding could therefore be said to be part of a more general problematic of intervention – the circumstances under when it was appropriate to intervene; the means

through which intervention should be undertaken; the measures that should be put in place once intervention had occurred.

The *Brahimi Report* (UN 2000) explored how peacekeeping and peacebuilding could be more effectively integrated into a general strategy. In contrast to preceding reports (UN 1992; UN 1995) that had been more concerned with clarifying key concepts and themes, it evidenced a closer preoccupation with logistical co-ordination. It also touched upon the co-ordination between different agencies and post-conflict actors, the UN Secretariat's post-conflict capacities and the development of peace enforcement capabilities. In the *Prevention of Armed Conflict* (UN 2001) the serving UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan stressed the centrality and significance of conflict prevention. Annan suggested that prevention would be considerably improved by an improved understanding of the roots of violent conflict, a subject that *An Agenda for Peace* had previously engaged in great depth and detail. Annan placed a similar faith in 'good governance' and 'sustainable development' frameworks, presenting both as a means through which preventative and post-conflict interventions could be more effectively integrated.

In reading these documents alongside each other, the reader is struck by the sense of a linear progression, which runs through and conjoins each document. The reader is left with a clear impression – and this is to some extent reproduced within the broader peacebuilding literature – that post-conflict peacebuilding is a progression beyond prior limitations and that it is, by implication, far better adjusted to the challenges and complexities of a post-Cold War environment that presented novel challenges.

This point was clearly appreciated by Mary Kaldor, who argued that it was entirely inappropriate to view the wars of the late twentieth century as a recidivist reversion to a barbarism that modernism had long surpassed. This, she suggested, would be to mistake the form for the content. In Kaldor's view these 'new' wars were inextricably linked into modernity and its hyper-acceleration in the form of globalisation. The new wars therefore originated within a dichotomy: while their ostensible form suggested a reversion, their underlying dynamics could be traced back to global integration. Kaldor clearly reiterated this dichotomy when she defined globalisation as: '[A] contradictory



process involving [integration] and fragmentation, homogenisation and diversification, globalisation and localisation (1999, 3).'

In Kaldor's analysis, globalisation placed new stresses and strains upon the domestic state. States dependent upon external benefactors were increasingly vulnerable and insecure, with the consequence that state weakness and state collapse were increasingly pronounced features of the international order (Zartman, 1995). Statebuilding therefore implied an analysis of state weakness and a practical commitment to the establishment of functional, accountable and representative states. Yannis (also see Robinson 1998 and Krasner 2004) linked these two agendas (globalisation and statebuilding) when he referenced a 'post-Cold War international environment in which globalisation and the decline of state authority have become the quintessential questions of our time' (2003, 65).

In common with Huntington's *Clash of Civilisations*, Kaldor sought to shatter the Panglossian naiveté that had accompanied the end of the Cold War. Far from ushering in an 'end of history', this period instead gave rise to a series of brutal, complex and internecine conflicts. In divulging itself of liberal illusions and self-deceits, the international community now addressed itself to:

[a] new breed of intra-state conflicts [that] have certain characteristics that present United Nations peacekeepers with challenges not presented since the early 1960s. They are usually fought not only by regular armies but also by militias and armed civilians with little discipline and with ill-defined chains of command. They are often guerrilla wars without clear front lines. (UN 1995)

These developments anticipated the emergence of a comprehensive approach to post-conflict peacebuilding. State breakdown, the heightened pre-eminence of irregular military forces and the collapse of the distinction between civilian and combatant all presented clear and immediate challenges which could not be tackled within established terms of engagement. Ongoing developments virtually demanded an adaptive, multi-dimensional and comprehensive approach to conflict intervention.

## 2. The Component Parts of Post-Conflict Peacebuilding: Governance, Development and Security

Post-conflict peacebuilding began to consolidate as a significant practice within the international system at the beginning of the 1990s. The term describes interventions in the aftermath of protracted violent conflicts, which are directed towards underlying causes and structures of violence. Whereas peacebuilding engages *prior* to the outbreak of violence, peacekeeping is instead, to the extent that it is concerned with the mediation of violence after it breaks out, essentially *subsequent*. A further point of distinction can be found within the fact that post-conflict peacebuilding anticipates wholesale transformation. In the words of Duffield, it anticipates ‘a level of intrusion and social engineering hitherto frowned upon by the international community’ (Duffield 2003, 291).

In its ideal form, post-conflict peacebuilding is multi-dimensional in character, simultaneously working across economic, political and social points to provide integrated responses to the outbreak of violence. Beate Jahn has previously spoken of a Holy Trinity, which consists of governance, development and security. In this chapter (and in my analysis of complementarity), I develop this tri-partite framework in more detail. I intend to specifically focus upon the question of how each of these elements becomes subject to a discursive ‘broadening’ or ‘widening’, within the wider context of a comprehensive approach.

Approaches which engage with democracy promotion, development and security through a ‘broadened’ framework of reference make operational the grounding premise of a comprehensive approach – namely that individual imperatives can only be realised through a ‘comprehensive’ approach that incorporates each element into an overarching framework of engagement. In this chapter I will discuss how the three components of the Holy Trinity become, under the aegis of a comprehensive approach, subject to a discursive broadening.

I will begin by discussing the promotion of democracy. Within the literature, a number of different terms denote this single imperative, with governance, democracy promotion and democratisation being used interchangeably. In each instance, the efforts of peacebuilding practitioners are

directed towards the establishment of a political process that is open, accountable and responsive to public needs and expectations. For the purposes of the current discussion, it is necessary to differentiate 'narrow' fixations upon a particular practice (e.g. electoral reform) from 'broader', 'holistic' or 'comprehensive' engagements.

Nancy Bermeo has previously referred to 'minimalist' frameworks of democracy promotion, which are concerned with establishing and upholding the principle of elite accountability (2003, 153-154). Melissa Labonte has described 'circumscribed' frameworks of democratic reference, which fixate upon the rationality, inclusivity and functionality of political institutions (2003, 262). And Thomas Carothers, similarly presenting a restricted or confined political focus, writes about a 'democracy template', which is comprised of elections, state institutions and civil society engagement (1999, 86), being transferred and applied across different contexts.

In each of these contributions, 'democracy' is defined in very precise terms, being delineated in an equally exact form. This sense of delimitation is similarly invoked within Carothers's allusion to a 'democracy template'. As he observes: 'Each project in the typical US portfolio aims to shape a particular sector or institution along the lines of its counterpart in Western democracies' (1999, 90; also see Paris 1997, 63).

Carothers correctly identifies that this template rests upon a very precise definition of a pre-determined democratic form that can be transferred across different contexts. This can be clearly contrasted with Lederach's 'process structure', which is instead defined by the *absence* of predetermination or a prescribed outcome (1997, 84). Lederach's emphasis upon process reiterates that the concept is formed through its articulation – it does not stand outside of or beyond process. The form, to put it slightly differently, does not anticipate the content. To the same extent, the form does not exist independently of the context in which it is articulated and the ideal is not counterpoised to the actual.

Lederach touches upon an important tension within the democratisation literature. Bermeo, Labonte and Carothers had, in focusing their attention upon a precise set of institutional amendments, essentially defined democracy in very precise, exact and formal terms. In contrast, Lederach's account asserts an understanding of democracy that is open, undefined and essentially informal in

character. To a certain extent, Lederach's analysis of democracy can be directly counterpoised and contrasted with the initial understanding.

Bermeo and Labonte had, when using pejorative terms such as 'minimalist' and 'circumscribed' to describe their perception of democratisation, anticipated a more substantive framework of democracy promotion. In contrast, other contributors have taken a 'minimalist' or 'circumscribed' model of democracy as their basis of engagement. Reilly (2001), Belloni (2004) and Reynolds (2005), for example, have specifically focused upon the question of how different electoral systems either increase or reduce the risk of violent conflict. Sisk (1996) and Barnett et al (2006) also focus upon the question of how specific institutional arrangements can further the ends and objectives of peacebuilding (also see World Bank 1999). Each of these contributors can be said to be 'minimalised' or 'circumscribed' in their analytical perspective because they essentially reduce the broad question of democracy to a set of highly formalised institutional adjustments and amendments.

Bermeo's and Labonte's allusion to 'minimalist' or 'circumscribed' models of democracy reiterate that it is possible to conceive democracy within a very different framework of reference. Call and Cook provide a potential starting point in this respect when they point out the deeply rooted assumption that each of the component parts of liberal democracy are mutually reinforcing (2003, 237). This contribution establishes the direction for an analysis that seeks to adjust or negotiate the terms of liberal reference, and this is precisely what Barkawi and Laffey (1999) attempt to do when they unravel and explore the *a priori* tension between the liberal and the democratic. Heathershaw and Lambach similarly focus on this point when they consider the internal tensions and contradictions of liberal governance (2008).

In seeking to democratise existing frameworks of engagement, a number of observers have stressed the need for a heightened engagement from local actors and agencies. Newman, for example, calls for an engagement which 'balanc[es] top-down and bottom-up approaches, recognis[es] the realities of power and aspir[es] to cosmopolitan aspirations and a positive peace' (2009, 38). In questioning the existing ordering and alignment of liberal frameworks, Newman advocates a framework of reference which actively incorporates 'local voices, desires and forms of politics' (2010, 319; also see Richmond 2005).

In direct opposition to the idea of 'circumscribed' or 'minimised' frameworks of engagement, Newman does not conceive of democracy as an optimised or more efficient form of decision-making; rather, he presents it as a means through which forms of social and economic exclusion can be directly addressed and remedied (also see Lederach 1997; Chopra and Hohe 2004, 289; Richmond 2011, 13). In contrast to its more formal counterparts, this represents a 'deepened' or more substantive framework of democratic reference. Lederach (1997), Chopra and Hohe (2004, 289) and Richmond (2011, 13) offer similarly expansive and far-reaching accounts of democratic engagement. In each of these contributions, attention is focused upon the form and character of the domestic political settlement. However, it is equally important to recognise that the question of democracy promotion can also be conceived with reference to internal-external relations, as Labonte affirms when she observes that, '[S]hifting the strategic enterprise of [peacebuilding] activities from a deductive, structural perspective to an inductive, process-driven one brings local priorities to the fore, rather than subjecting them to donor priorities' (2003; 271).

Here Labonte helpfully identifies a number of key features that are associated with a 'deepened' or more substantive framework of democratic engagement. Her initial allusion to an inductive process affirms that we are concerned with an open-ended process that is not in any sense predetermined; secondly, she emphasises local priorities; finally, she disavows external influence. Each of these three stresses counterpoises a 'maximalist' and 'minimalist' account of democracy promotion.

In drawing out the conceptual and practical implications of a comprehensive approach, liberal peacebuilding actors have gravitated towards a more substantive model of democratic engagement; this is the development that the deepening chapter will engage in more depth and detail. A similar shift is also evidenced within those sections of the peacebuilding literature that engage with the challenges and complexities of development. A number of contributions to this literature explicitly disavow technocratic frameworks of reference, and instead stress the centrality of political engagement (see OECD 1991; World Bank 1990, 60). This politicisation has corresponded with a

heightened emphasis upon themes such as civil society engagement, empowerment and state decentralisation. The prodigious rise of the 'good governance' paradigm should similarly be understood in this context.

In registering the significance of this development, Hameiri observes that, from the 'late 1990s, neoliberal development orthodoxy has shifted its attention from focusing purely on economic policy towards emphasising the functioning of the domestic governing institutions of recipient states' (2010; 73). Hameiri's reference to 'functioning' reiterates the emerging agenda of state capacity, which supplanted a prior emphasis upon the accentuation or removal of state influence. By virtue of this adjustment, development was no longer a narrow economic concern, but was instead conceived with reference to a wider range of political questions and themes. In acknowledging this, the OECD spoke of 'the dramatic widening of the scope and ambition of the development co-operation agenda' (1997b, 18).

While this adjustment was in many senses necessitated by the limitations of neo-liberal governance, it should be recognised that it does not represent a decisive break with neo-liberalism itself; quite the contrary, it instead implies a reorientation towards neo-liberal statebuilding. Capacity-building within this framework is ultimately orientated towards enhancing the ability to participate within neo-liberal governance. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, the former UN Secretary-General, summarised this essential point in the following terms:

The social stability needed for productive growth is nurtured by conditions in which people can readily express their will. For this, strong domestic institutions of participation are essential. Promoting such institutions means promoting the empowerment of the unorganised, the poor, the marginalised. (UN 1992)

Over the course of the 1990s, institutions came to be widely conceived as the central determinant of successful development. Development agencies increasingly came to recognise that strong institutions enabled the stresses and strains of the development process to be successfully managed (ICISS 2001; UN Millennium Project 2005; Paris and Sisk 2009, 10). The World Bank therefore explicitly asserted that '[c]ountries need markets to grow but they need capable state institutions to grow markets' (1997, 38). The emerging orthodoxy no longer placed state and market in diametric opposition, but

instead originated the insight that ‘markets rest upon a foundation of institutions’ (ibid, 41). It was not merely that institutions were an important consideration within the development process. Neo-liberal institutionalism went further to insist that ‘institutions are the critical variable in development’ (2004, 29; UNDP 2001, 24).

At the same time, development orthodoxy was increasingly accentuating the active engagement and empowerment of local actors (Fraser 2005, 317). As empowerment, local ownership and participation became increasingly pronounced parts of the development agenda, its managerial and technocratic tenets were increasingly attenuated. In contrast to modernisation, which had sought to make individual societies approximate to a singular vision, development increasingly appeared as an open-ended framework that was receptive to cultural and social specificity. Whereas modernisation theory has a very precise and exact trajectory, development theory is instead characterised by the absence of an ‘advance blueprint’ (OECD 1997b). This recalls our earlier engagement with Lederach’s ‘process-orientated’ approach to democracy promotion, in which the contents of democracy are not prescribed but only emerge in the process of their articulation.

This articulation is endogenous to individual societies: it cannot be imposed from above or from without. This proposition has been questioned by some observers, who have continued to insist upon the disciplinary or regulatory character of development. Mark Duffield, for example, suggests that the ‘broadening’ of the development agenda (OECD 1997b, 18) represents an adaptation or refinement of disciplinary instruments. He explicitly refers to the ‘radicalisation of development and its reinvention as a strategic tool of conflict resolution and social reconstruction’ (2003, 1049). The use of ‘strategic’ is particularly significant in this context, suggesting that development is tied up with the realisation of external priorities. Fraser’s (2005) critical encounter with ‘local’ development similarly highlights its regulatory implications.

In common with the development field, security studies also underwent a number of important innovations in the post-Cold War era. For security specialists, it had been an almost intuitive assumption that security was co-terminus with the state, with the state representing both the object and method of security. This began to change when critical security theorists began to probe

and challenge the very meaning of 'security'. The emerging paradigm of 'human security' thereby questioned the pre-eminence afforded to the state, and actively sought to elevate human welfare as the preponderant concern. Roland Paris (2001, 99) has described how, during this period, 'the basic concept of security [became] redefined, [to place] much more weight on the needs and concerns of human beings and the quality of their environment' (OECD 1995).

This implied that security was no longer to be understood as an objective condition, that could be analysed and understood independently of context and subjective priorities. 'Security' was increasingly theorised and understood with reference to the denial of fundamental rights, the weakness or absence of social and political participation, and the absence of social and economic development. Incidentally, the reverse also applied: underdevelopment became securitised and conceived as a threat to international security (Zartman 1995; Rice 2003; Yannis 2003).

By the end of the 1990s, as the statebuilding agenda became an increasingly pressing priority for international actors, the state reasserted itself as an indispensable point of reference. In acknowledging this development, Ghani and Lockhart spoke of a 'renewed recognition of the state's contemporary centrality' (1998, 26). Almost a decade later, OECD guidelines would reiterate that external intervention should 'focus upon statebuilding as the central objective' (2007). Statebuilding represented an integrated approach that traversed economic, political and social processes. It faithfully reproduced one of the central axioms of the comprehensive approach: namely, that democracy promotion, development and security should be understood in their interrelation. A fully functional state would enhance legitimacy and this in turn would produce a heightened level of security. Ghani and Lockhart explicitly reiterated this point when they asserted that the 'solutions to our current problems of insecurity, poverty and lack of growth all converge on the need for a statebuilding project' (2009, 4).

Ghani and Lockhart's contribution presents us with a state that is deeply integrated into economic and social processes. Self-evidently, this is not the autonomous state that has historically featured so prominently within the theory and practice of the state, and which Cunliffe invokes when he refers to 'an institution that is over and above society' (2007, 49; Barnett 2006, 91). Quite the



contrary, this is instead a state that is integrated into a complex array of state-societal relations, whose very legitimacy is contingent upon its ability to satisfy social expectations, needs and requirements. In encapsulating this development, Duffield would speak of the emergence and consolidation of the 'governance state'.

This 'governance' state rests upon the pillars of 'good governance' and 'state capacity'. It is not reducible to specific attributes and features, but is instead intelligible in terms of the specific functions that it performs and the quality of its relationships. In many respects, the governance state is not intelligible as a form but rather as a set of interlinking relationships and interactions. This model subtly alters and reconfigures the component parts of the Holy Trinity. No longer conceived in isolation, each component part becomes mutually reinforcing and intelligible in its interrelation.

The literature on good governance and state-societal relations (Paris 2002, 654, 655; Paris and Sisk 2009, 1-2), for instance, furthers the impression that 'security' is reducible to a set of relationships and interactions. This finds a further echo within the World Bank's previous assertion that state strength is grounded within legitimacy (1995, viii). In this understanding, state security is not ensured through coercion or force, but is instead enabled by the enhancement of 'multi-stakeholder relationships' and the '[management of] complexity and interrelationships' (Ghani and Lockhart 1998, 52).

This emphasis upon 'political' relations and interactions can, at first glance, be directly counterpoised to 'technical' frameworks that are more predisposed to originate generalizable categories and concepts that apply across contexts and which can be measured against a standardised scale.

Helman and Ratner's (1992-1993) hugely influential contribution, for example, traced state failure back to a general post-colonial condition. The failure of post-colonial states, they suggested, was reducible to a failure to approximate to a 'Weberian state, [based on] legal-rational authority, technical standards and enforcement capacity' (Woodward 2006, 26; Schlichte and Migdal 2005, 5; Ottaway 2002, 1003).

In similarly taking an abstracted understanding of state capacity as their core point of reference, contributions from Jackson and Rosberg (1982), Crocker (2003) and Rubin (2005) discuss the question of how state security can

be further enhanced. For each of these writers, the concept of the autonomous or Weberian state provides a number of functions. Firstly, it provides a framework of analysis in which successes and failures are relative to the level of autonomy that the state has been able to achieve; secondly, it provides a practical focus and measure of success – statebuilding interventions are to be assessed with reference to the level of autonomy that they help to achieve; finally, it provides an end objective – statebuilding interventions should endeavour to achieve the autonomous state (also see Rice 2003, and Fukuyama 2004). In reiterating the grounding assumption of this framework, Katarina Ammitzbøll and Stina Torjesen observe that

The aim [is] to create a state that exercises legitimate and effective authority throughout the national territory and upholds the rule of law. [Statebuilding] seeks to ensure that the state has a monopoly over the use of armed force, the ability to raise necessary revenues and that the state institutions are capable of carrying out their administrative tasks effectively. (2007, 16)

In the post-Cold War era, this model of statebuilding was increasingly challenged and contested. The Social Structuralism literature, for instance, sought to demonstrate that this attempt to detach the state from society was doomed to failure, along with the perpetual repetition of its own contradictions (Milliken and Krause 2003; Chandler 2006, 48; Bickerton 2007). A number of observers (see Yannis 2003; Engelbert and Tull 2008) have observed, for instance, that the notion of ‘state failure’ is, for the reason that it forecloses the ‘solution’, an essential tautology. One of the main contributions of the literature on Social Structuralism has been to demonstrate that state ‘strength’ and ‘capacity’ are not general attributes that can be abstracted from the individual context; quite the contrary – such terms only attain meaning within a social context.

Although its grounding assumptions were increasingly open to challenge and contestation, the Weberian state continued to exercise a strong hold upon statebuilding practitioners. Its continued salience is attested to by genealogies of state failure (Pureza, 2006), which contrast early 1990s accounts of state failure (e.g. Helman and Ratner 1992-1993) with their post-2001 counterparts (see Crocker 2003, and Krasner and Pascual 2005). These contributions demonstrate that, although the terms of reference have incrementally

expanded, the Weberian state appears as a continuous thread, which runs through the different parts of the statebuilding literature (Lemay-Hebert 2009, 23; Migdal and Schlichte 2005, 2). The general thread persists, even as a number of its core tenets (such as bureaucratic domination – specifically the belief that states should be ‘more effective agents of control over their territory and population’ (see Rubin 2005, 97; World Bank 1997, 20)) are openly contested.

In this sub-section I have engaged with each of the constitutive elements of post-conflict peacebuilding – governance, development and security. In engaging at each point, I have highlighted key shifts, progressions and evolutions. For the most part, my attention has focused upon the question of how ‘narrow’ frameworks of reference have been superseded and replaced by ‘broader’, ‘deeper’ or more comprehensive counterparts.

### **3. Liberal Peacebuilding: Core Features**

Liberal peacebuilding is premised upon the belief that the transfer of liberal tenets, processes and structures to post-conflict contexts will establish the basis for a lasting peace. Barnett et al define liberal peacebuilding as a set of operations that seek to create a state ‘defined by the rule of law, markets and democracy’ (2006 88). Richmond, meanwhile, observes that the main components of the liberal peace include democratisation, the rule of law, human rights, free and globalised markets and neo-liberal development (2006, 292).

Liberal peacebuilding operates within the framework of reference that has been established by the ‘liberal peace’. Oliver Richmond defines the latter as ‘the biases of a specific set of actors, a knowledge system and epistemic community, allied to a narrow set of interests, norms, institutions and techniques’ (Richmond 2011, 3). Writers working within the framework of the ‘liberal peace’ include Michael Barnett, Simon Chesterman, Thomas Carothers, Jaret Chopra and Michael Doyle. Roland Paris also falls within this category, although it is perhaps important to clarify that his work essentially represents an attempt to salvage or ‘save’ liberal peacebuilding from its internal contradictions. These writers generally converge upon a common project that holds that the spread of liberal values and practices will contribute to a more harmonious and peaceful world order.

Although it originates within a clear set of ideological commitments, liberal peace is not static nor is it confined to a specific set of objects. Instead, by working within a comprehensive approach, peacebuilding actors have originated a series of ‘broadening’ and ‘deepening’ effects. In seeking to re-orientate liberal peacebuilding towards local needs and priorities, Call and Cook have, for example, called for a heightened engagement with context. They assert that: ‘More attention [should] be paid to specific and local context and to [the] integration of appropriate external governance models with local, legitimate, practices in war-torn societies’ (2003, 234). The understanding that external intervention should be aligned with local context has increasingly assumed the status of a policy axiom. Call and Cousens therefore give voice to a widely shared consensus when they assert that ‘External actors need to understand the history, politics and cultures in which they are attempting to build peace’ (2008, 14; see also Reynolds 2005, 27; UNDP 2001, 13).

Barnett et al (2006) invoke a ‘deepened’ form of democratic engagement to critique ‘elitist’ or ‘top-down’ approaches to liberal peacebuilding. While still operating within a liberal framework of reference, they make use of republican concepts to stress the need for a heightened emphasis upon deliberation and participation within peace operations (see also Chopra and Hohe 2004). Donais (2009), meanwhile, draws attention to the ways in which improved levels of local ownership can improve operational outcomes (2009). In each of these three contributions we encounter a clear confidence that ‘top-down’ and ‘externalised’ distortions can be resolved through the heightened participation of local actors.

However, this proposition of a ‘deepened’ democratisation is problematically reconciled with the technocratic dimensions of liberal peacebuilding. It encounters an equally obstinate obstacle in the form of externalisation – that is, the premise that peacebuilding is an essentially external exercise, which is guided and orientated by external actors (Charles-Philippe 1999, 3). Both instances raise the question of precisely how liberal peacebuilding manages to overcome or ‘reconcile’ these dissonances.

The puzzle is further compounded by the fact that Liberal peacebuilding is characterised by a pronounced lack of reflexivity. The introductory chapter made this point when it reiterated the need for liberal peacebuilding to

(re)engage with its underpinning assumptions (see Paris 2002, 656; Bellamy 2004, 31; Richmond 2011, 58). There is a persistent assumption, which all too frequently escapes critical scrutiny, that ‘problems must be solved rather than solutions problematised’ (Heathershaw and Lambach 2008, 275).

By virtue of the unchallenged pre-eminence of liberal ideology there is a clear sense that the essential components are already present and that the central question is how they can be arranged or implemented. This predisposition was even more clearly evidenced during the initial period of application when, as Sabaratnam observes (see also Paris 1997; OECD 2005, 34), the terms of discussion were ‘highly focused on the technical questions of sequencing and speed’ (2011, 17). By virtue of this conceptual and practical inheritance, it is perhaps unsurprising that ‘most works on the subject have sought to provide practical recommendations [which] aim at improving the ability of peacebuilders to control local conflict’ (Paris 2002, 656; see also Bellamy 2004).

While Paris shows a clear willingness to transgress beyond the limitations that this framework imposes, he ultimately collapses back into it – his indictment of previous ‘missteps’ is telling precisely because it is preceded by the clear impression that, under different circumstances, a separate set of steps could and should have been undertaken. In this respect, Paris brings to mind Lund’s appeal for a more ‘appropriate’ balancing of hard and soft approaches (2003, 40). While Paris is aware of the limitations of this framework, he is ultimately predisposed to collapse back into it. Bickerton, in striding towards the conclusion that Paris can only tentatively venture towards, appropriately reminds us that ‘[b]ecause problems arise from the political nature of the statebuilding project, they [cannot be] amenable to mere technocratic solution’ (2007, 93). From this question, the essential question is whether liberal peacebuilding can fully divest itself of its technocratic dimensions and assume an unconflicted appearance.

A similar puzzle originates in relation to the question of externalisation. Here too there is a sense that liberal peacebuilding can transgress beyond the limitations that derive from external distortions. The purported ‘local turn’ is an essential development in this respect, equipping peacebuilders with the mentality and operational techniques that will enable them to engage with local

actors and agendas. In invoking this orthodoxy, Malloch-Brown is emboldened to claim that 'primary responsibility for conflict resolution lies not with the international community, but with the governments and civil societies in affected countries' (2003, 145). Peacebuilding is thereby presented to us as a blank canvass upon which local actors can inscribe their vision of a just and meaningful peace. The tension between generality and case specificity (Call and Cousens, 2008; 15) is thereby comprehensively bypassed, a relic of a less enlightened era. In offering a similarly optimistic appraisal, Doornbos invites us to concur that liberal peacebuilding actors have learned to 'de-generalise'.

However, this is far from a universally accepted consensus and there are a number of contributions which call this assertion into question (see Sending 2011; Call and Cook 2003, 238; Call and Cousens 2008, 15; Woodward 2006, 63-64). For some observers, exteriority is not an unfortunate by-product; rather, it is anticipated within the conceptual and theoretical foundations of liberal peacebuilding (see Engelbert and Tull 2008, 134; Heathershaw and Lambach 2008, 273; Richmond 2004; Marshall 2008, 4; Lemay Herbert 2009, 22). In further reiterating this point, Paris reminds us that liberal peacebuilding involves 'the promulgation not just of liberal values and institutions, but [the] idea of the state itself' (2002; 655).

It could be suggested that the liberal peace's critique of externalisation is articulated within clear limitations: the critique of external distortions can proceed up to a point but can go no further. In apparent denial of the structural attributes of externalisation, improved implementation and application persistently assert themselves as correctives (Paris 2002; Lund 2003). This does little or nothing to offset the suspicion that the tension between the internal and external is rooted within the practices that invoke and reproduce the 'local'.

## Critical Perspectives

### 1.The Contribution of Critical Perspectives

The first part of this review has largely concerned itself with setting out the distinctive features and attributes of liberal peacebuilding. Critical contributions were intermittently referenced for illustrative effect, but the time has now come for a more sustained engagement with critical perspectives. In engaging at these points, I seek to question, subvert and challenge the grounding assumptions of liberal peacebuilding.

My introductory chapter has already established the outlines of a critical engagement. It has made an important contribution by affirming that a critical reading should be addressed to the *a priori* components of the liberal peace. In opposition to the sense of progression that is imbued within liberal peacebuilding, it is therefore imperative to regress to taken-for-granted assumptions. As Roland Paris observes, this is particularly important because '[s]cholars have dedicated relatively little attention to analysing the concept of peacebuilding itself, including its underlying assumptions' (1997, 55; see also Haugerudbraaten 1998).

Critical observers have sought to explore this possibility in more depth by questioning the nature or character underpinning liberal peace. For these observers, the focusing concern is to identify how liberal peacebuilding is situated within broader power relations. Mark Duffield observes that 'the liberal peace [is] not ultimately emancipatory or transformative in ambition or effect: rather it [is] a regulatory network of governance' (2007; see also Sabaratnam 2011, 22). In direct opposition to the liberal peace, which conceives of a fuller flowering of an inherent potentiality, Duffield posits a series of constrictions and enclosures. This resonates in the assertion that the liberal peace is co-terminus with 'fixed definitions and categories' (Barkawi and Laffey 1999, 412) and echoes within Richmond's stated concern with the limitations that adhere within 'peace-as-governance' (2009, 57; 2011, 12).

Each of these contributions offers a clear counterpoint to a 'pragmatic peacebuilding' (Heathershaw, 1998; 2) that is less concerned with what it is, and more with the question of how it can be put into effect. This 'pragmatism' is characterised by a practical predisposition and a pronounced disinterest in

abstract speculation. This perhaps explains why, in engaging with the peacebuilding literature, we repeatedly discover key concepts that are under-theorised and underdeveloped (see Lemay-Hebert 2009, 22; Gruffydd Jones 2008, 186; Heathershaw 2010, 598).

An adherence to 'pragmatic peacebuilding' therefore implies a certain delimitation of vision, a blindness to wider considerations. This practical commitment enhances the likelihood that tensions and contradictions will be reproduced in subsequent effect (Bickerton 2007, 100-107). This anticipates the central paradox of liberal peacebuilding: repeated failure does not bring about a questioning of underpinning assumptions but rather a renewed application. This perverse repetition (Chandler 2009, 4) is the very antithesis of the sense of momentum that is deeply imbued within liberal peacebuilding discourse. Closer reflection reveals that certain 'lessons' cannot be acknowledged, much less 'learned'. As Barnett et al observe: '[Peacebuilding] strategies, more often than not, reflect unexamined assumptions and deeply rooted organisational mandates rather than "best practices" born from empirical analysis' (Barnett et al, 2007, 53; see also Engelbert and Tull 2008, 109).

This sense of oscillation and repetition will later be engaged in the contextuality chapter. The initial reference point has already been engaged in Newman's invocation of an approach which 'balanc[es] top-down and bottom-up approaches, recognis[es] the realities of power and aspir[es] to cosmopolitan aspirations and a positive peace' (2009, 38). The subsequent oscillation is anticipated in the accounts of externalisation that we have already engaged. In this respect, it is the external dimensions of liberal peacebuilding that appear to be, to borrow from a previous indictment of liberal peacebuilding, 'under-theorised and under-developed'.

Newman's contribution, in common with a sizable part of the literature on democratisation, is vulnerable to the criticism that it offers an ideological and empirically naïve account of democratisation. In Chapter Two I will look to further develop this critique by illustrating how freedom functions as an essential intermediary within the circulation and exertion of government. Bickerton anticipates this analysis when he suggests that the ultimate aspiration of peacebuilding is to establish 'nodes integrated into the international system of governance' (2007, 107). Charles-Philippe offers a very similar conclusion when



he defines peacebuilding as ‘an external (foreign) intervention (national, multilateral or UN) [that] help[s] to create conditions conducive to peace’ (1999, 3). Their candour offers a welcome counterpoint to many of the deceptions and obfuscations which accompany elite invocations of local-level ‘participation’, ‘empowerment’ and ‘ownership’.

In this chapter I seek to demonstrate how a critical analysis can disassemble and untangle the component parts of the liberal peace. Rather than reproducing the liberal peace in subsequent effect, I instead seek to establish the grounds for an analysis that engages with power relations and openly problematises deeply ingrained regularities and linearities. I seek to expose the limitations that adhere within liberal peacebuilding and to explore the paths and routes that lie beyond. In working towards a critical framework of analysis, I engage across three separate points: firstly, I discuss critical political economy perspectives; secondly, I discuss critical contributions to the statebuilding literature; finally, I demonstrate how the general theme of complexity can be expanded into an expansive and encompassing critique of liberal peacebuilding

## **2.Critical Perspectives: Disciplinary Liberalism**

For liberal observers, violence is diametrically opposed to a benign and sanctified liberal peace. Liberal institutions, processes and structures provide a means through which violence can be resolved; by implication, they are not involved in its outbreak or perpetuation. The liberal peace is predicated upon the belief that the spread of liberal norms, principles and values will inculcate a more stable and harmonious world order. The concept of ‘intra-state’ warfare furthers this abrupt juxtaposition of a volatile, conflict-ridden internal sphere and a benign, tranquil external order.

In seeking to overcome the limitations imposed by this dichotomy, a number of observers have sought to achieve an essential inversion – they have therefore sought to highlight the various ways in which external influences are implicated within ‘internal’ or ‘civil’ wars. Duffield (2001), Bendaña (2003) and Berdal (2004) have sought to demonstrate how external ‘drivers’ feed into internal conflict dynamics. Paris previously demonstrated how external actors,

in seeking to introduce neo-liberal reforms at the domestic level, have destabilised and undermined broader peacebuilding objectives (1997, 59).

As the earlier contribution from Barnett et al (2007, 53) suggests, this affirms that policy interventions are not always guided by lessons that have been learned; rather, as Chandler (2009) and De Guevara (2009) observe, this entrenched bias towards neo-liberal reform instead suggests an engagement which can be traced back to ideological foundations. Liberal ideology, rather than an empirically grounded analysis or the needs of local actors, provides the basis upon which liberal peacebuilding proceeds and develops.

Writers within the post-Marxist tradition, such as Michael Pugh, have sought to highlight the various tensions, contradictions and imbalances that are built into the economic dimensions of liberal peace. In these accounts, which take the distortions of neo-liberal governance as their key point of reference, the liberal peace is presented as an external imposition that is only sustained through various degrees of force and coercion. Chandler, in offering a characteristically structural analysis, draws attention to instances in which local actors have been 'reduced to the administrative bodies of external power' (2002, 192). Far from 'empowering' or 'enabling' local actors, external influence instead subjects them to various forms of mediation and oversight. This again brings us back to the proposition that liberal peace is, as Duffield has proposed, a 'regulatory network of governance'. It inculcates 'appropriate' political conduct and sets out the ends and objectives that should orientate policy interventions.

Critical observers have developed this feature to argue that violence is not external to, but is instead intermeshed with, the frameworks and practices that are implemented within post-conflict contexts. The liberal order is, upon the basis of this understanding, not sustained by an immanent reason, but rather by various forms of domination and control (it is however important to acknowledge, in common with Andreas (2004) and Gruffydd Jones (2008), various points of subaltern resistance). Cramer (2006, 299) explicitly makes this point when he observes that 'violence is not just an aberration or virus that afflicts societies; it is part of potential development' (see Moore 2000). In direct contrast to liberal perspectives, violence is no longer understood to be 'rare, exceptional [or] aberrant' (Cooper, 607), but is instead deeply ingrained within various aspects and attributes of 'normality' (see also Wennmann 2005).

The established development holds that it is imperative for post-conflict states to integrate into the wider global economic system. This integration, it is established, will establish the basis for foreign investment, enable the individual state to develop comparative advantage and benefit from international trade. Critical voices raise the clear objection that integration under existing terms will raise just as many problems as solutions: integration into a global economic system that is inherently volatile, unstable and predatory will invariably produce a range of destabilising effects. Richards (2004) therefore depicts a purgatory-like state, in which there is 'no peace and no war'. Pugh has similarly pointed out instances in which neo-liberal reforms have extended the life cycle of conflicts beyond their natural point of termination.

While liberal peacebuilding agencies have evidenced an ability to engage with these contributions, it is clear that this engagement has occurred within clear limitations and constraints. While these agencies have now deigned to admit the consequences of 'premature' integration, this recognition has failed to penetrate to the ideological foundations of the liberal worldview, that is to the fact that the contemporary capitalist world order is only sustained through various forms of violence (Paris 1997, 59).

The value of each of these contributions derives from their open problematisation of the smooth regularities and continuities which characterise the liberal peace. In place of its emancipatory pretensions they instead insert various forms of discipline and regulation. Disciplinary liberalism is not sustained through an immanent reason, but is instead perpetuated by various forms of force and coercion, being synonymous with a sense of denial, restriction or limitation.

### **3.Critical Perspectives: The Limitations and Possibilities of Statebuilding**

In the first part of this review I referenced approaches that sought to work within the framework of the Weberian state. I observed that this framework had given rise to the misperception that statebuilding was an essentially technocratic concern and that the state could be theorised and analysed in independence from the context in which it operates, giving rise to the premise that capacity and institutional strength could be understood in isolation from

societal determinants. Chandler (2006), Bickerton (2007) and Lemay-Hebert (2009, 27), in reiterating that statebuilding is inherently political, further underline that technocratic approaches recreate the conditions of their own failure. Lemay-Hebert (2009) makes the same point by reiterating that the state is frequently an alien entity that is essentially imposed upon individual contexts – this is why statebuilding interventions so frequently give rise to the phenomenon of ‘phantom’ states (Yannis 2003; Chandler 2006). Far from being accidental or coincidental, this is in fact the logical conclusion of the belief that sovereignty can be ‘be mechanistically isolated from society’ (Bickerton 2007, 99).

The social structuralism branch of the peacebuilding literature therefore emerged in response to the limitations and shortcomings of statebuilding interventions. In reiterating the centrality of social processes and structures in the statebuilding process, it provided a welcome response to accounts which privileged – in both analytical and practical terms - the autonomous state. In relating the core components of this branch of the literature, Lemay-Hebert refers to a ‘sociologically or anthropologically orientated approach’ [that] emphasise[s] the particularities of each state and its societal context’ (2009, 28; also see Zartman 1995). This approach does not understand the state in isolation, but instead attempts to understand it within a social context and with reference to relations that link the state into society (Zartman 1995; Migdal 2001; Barnett et al 2007, 50). In many respects, this approach inverts the Weberian state (Woodward 2006, 26). The state does not exert authority over society but is instead legitimised within and through social processes.

Universalisation and generalisation are therefore cancelled out by the contextual, local and specific. There is an implied refusal to present ‘historically situated techniques of government as universally effective’ (Zanotti 2006, 162). The state-in-society approach therefore establishes a clear point of limitation for technocratic frameworks (Robinson (1998), Migdal (2001), Milliken and Krause (2002) and Lemay-Herbert (2009)) and establishes the basis for a sociological analysis of the state.

As, this branch of the literature – in making the state’s authority conditional upon societal legitimisation – inverts established norms of

sovereignty (in which the state's ability to exert control *over* society is a defining attribute of state sovereignty).

As an analytical device, the state-in-society approach has the added benefit that it does not fetishise the state – it does not perceive all social phenomena (most notably violent conflict) to this single reference point, and thereby offers an alternative way of analysing, conceiving and understanding state formation and disintegration. In practical terms, state-in-society approaches reject the premise that statebuilding interventions should be directed towards the establishment of 'capable, autonomous and legitimate governmental institutions' (Paris and Sisk 2009, 1-2). This is because terms such as 'capacity' are not understood as generalizable categories but rather as terms that only obtain meaning within the given context – hence why Bickerton asserts that 'sovereignty is always of society' (2007, 99). This is also why Hameiri observes that it is necessary to begin from the premise that the 'strength of a society's institutions is a societal question, not merely an institutional one' (2010, 28).

The state-in-society approach is more concerned with the substantive contents of statebuilding than with the form. Pouligny clearly reiterates this point: 'Politics and statehood must be understood in their 'substantial' aspects, their diverse conceptions and properties, and not only in their formal appearances' (2005, 505; see also Herbst 1996, Berger 2006, Lemay-Hebert 2009 and de Guevara 2010).

Social structural accounts also collapse the binary distinctions that are so integral to liberal peacebuilding: internal in opposition to external, formal in opposition to informal, state in opposition to society. Duffield's allusion to the 'sovereign frontier', is significant because it captures both the blurring of previously sacrosanct forms and the relational attributes (with the frontier being defined as a 'fluid and relational zone' (2006)) of the state form. Hameiri similarly draws attention to this latter reference point when he relates the state as a 'dynamic set of power relations' (2010, 38).

Social structural accounts also inculcate a stronger sense of contingency. There is no premise that statebuilding interventions should be directed towards approximation or alignment. Quite the contrary, there is a clear grasp of the fact that statebuilding actors have all too frequently equated

‘variation’ with ‘deviation’. In privileging variation and heterogeneity, social structural approaches instead provide the basis for an analysis that does not ‘reduce’ the empirical products of statebuilding to idealised templates. In developing an analysis grounded within the local context, statebuilding actors will come to understand each instance in its specificity. Migdal and Schlichte observe that: ‘The challenge is to illuminate the variation in forms of the state expressed in this pluralism, rather than reducing all cases to more or less straying from the ideal-type’ (2005 13).

This insight also has important implications for the way that formal institutions are conceived and understood. Rather than being conceived autonomously, these institutions are understood in relation to their operational context, and in this respect, they can be said to be socially ‘nested’ (Lemay-Hebert 2009; Richmond 2009). Context imposes itself upon the terms of reference and demands acknowledgement. Doornbos and Chandler duly oblige when they call for ‘context and trajectory-specific approaches’ (Doornbos 2002, 810-811) and abruptly reject linear models of peacebuilding (Chandler 2013, 23).

In the contextuality chapter I demonstrate how the practitioners of liberal peace have come to internalise this framework of reference. For these actors, it has become a deeply ingrained article of truth that statebuilding interventions should not seek to reproduce a particular model of the state, but should instead provide a framework within which local actors can adjust the statebuilding process to local conditions.

Englebert and Tull use this understanding to explain the crisis of the African state. They thereby highlight how, in many instances, it is an artificial and even alien form, which has failed to penetrate the surrounding society. In addressing this point, they observe that the ‘essence of African statebuilding is the [fostering of] interaction and bargaining processes between state and society’ (2008, 138) (see also Doornbos 2002).

This insistence upon the importance of societal reference points originates within a prior understanding that the phenomenon of state collapse cannot be understood in general terms; rather, it can only be understood in relation to the specific instances in which it occurs. Because state-societal relations differ across each and every context, the precise circumstances of

state collapse must similarly diverge. Thus, Torres and Anderson assert that 'there is no single model for how we should work better in fragile states' (2004, 14). A contextually sensitive approach to statebuilding is therefore synonymous with a heightened level of heterogeneity and an abrupt rejection of one-size-fits-all approaches.

For other observers, context is not merely an analytical tool through which we can attain an improved understanding of the processes of state formation and disintegration; rather, it is the basis for an emancipatory agenda. MacGinty (2008), for example, has suggested that the heightened engagement and incorporation of indigenous practices by peacebuilding actors will help to resist the rationalising or universalising distortions of liberal peace. Norris (2008) also suggests that the distortions of the liberal peace can be overcome by the engagement of local actors at all stages of the peacebuilding process. Norris points out that, far from being passive or inert objects, local actors are possessed of their own agency. The post-conflict context is not a blank canvass awaiting the artistic flourishes of international technocrats, but is already possessed of a clear life and vitality. Upon the basis of both contributions, we are led to believe that there are strong practical and normative justifications for rooting peacebuilding interventions within local contexts.

#### **4.Critical Perspectives: Complexity and the Limitations of Liberal Peace**

One of the most frequently voiced criticisms of liberalism is that it essentially imposes itself upon a complex reality. It does not seek to understand the world as it is, but instead views and perceives the world as it would like it to be, a criticism which clearly recalls the Realist branch of international relations theory. Thomas Carothers, in directing his attention to detached and generic US democracy promotion initiatives, has similarly critiqued a 'transition paradigm', which reproduces a 'technocratic, gradualistic conception of democratisation' (1999, 91).

In engaging liberal peacebuilding from within a social structural framework of analysis, we can expound a very similar critique. The core objection is that the practitioners of liberal peace do not sufficiently acknowledge or engage context, but instead reduce context to the prior templates and preferences of liberal peace. The specifics of the local, social or contextual become lost, entrapped within binary distinctions and linear progressions. The imposition of external benchmarks and standards reconfigures the local context and reproduces it as an approximation to a general template, standard or requirement. Even in instances where deviation is evidenced, it is ultimately defined in relation to this initial framework of reference, with the consequence that statebuilding actors are perceived to be progressing to, or regressing from, a specific point. At this point we are reminded of Thomas Carothers's critique of the 'transition paradigm'. This paradigm, he observes, derives from 'a dangerous habit of trying to impose a simplistic and often incorrect conceptual order on an empirical tableau of considerable complexity' (2002, 15).

For social structural perspectives, binary distinctions and linear progressions are a sharp, abrupt and even brutal curtailment of the limitless potentials of contextual engagement. As David Chandler observes, social structuralism is guided and orientated by the principle of 'non-linearity' (2013), with the general being negotiated and adapted to local context. This suggests that the application of generic templates and frameworks to post-conflict contexts does not anticipate their reproduction but rather their reconfiguration, contestation and even vulgarisation.



'Deviation' is not an unfortunate or unwanted consequence; quite the contrary, it should instead be engaged and understood as a creative negotiation. Schlichte and Migdal therefore call for statebuilding practices to engage the local and contextual upon its own terms (2005, 3; see also Moore 2000 and Pugh 2005) while Richmond argues that 'backsliding' should be (re)conceived as a negotiation (2009).

This requires a fundamental change of mentality upon the part of statebuilding actors, whose interventions must become adjusted to heterogeneity and variation. David Chandler similarly reiterates that 'infrapolitics' (a form of informal politics grounded in the social sphere) should no longer be engaged as a product of weakness and repression but rather should instead be conceived 'as an ontological starting point for explaining the limits of peacebuilding' (2013, 29). Berger's (2006) discussion of the state's historicity and Milliken and Krause's engagement with the sociological and cultural dimensions of state formation similarly establish the basis for an analysis which surmounts the limitations of liberal peace.

Both contributions emphasise the politics of statebuilding. This is why Migdal and Schlichte explicitly call for an acknowledgement of the 'political nature of statebuilding relations' (2005, 35; also see Hameiri 2010, 37, 96) – by implication, any depoliticised or technocratic engagement is flawed from the outset and therefore doomed to the perpetual repetition of its own internal contradictions. A 'political' analysis implies an approach that is able to engage with the complexities and variations of the post-conflict context, and which is not reducible to templates and formulas. A 'political' engagement is also predisposed to engage at the level of relations rather than form. By virtue of the fact that these relations are singular to each context, they cannot be, in contrast to forms, extrapolated across different contexts.

In addition to being co-terminus with social reference points and heterogeneity, social structural approaches are also synonymous with contingency. As De Guevara observes, 'unintended effects of purposeful action are at the centre of state dynamics under conditions of statebuilding' (2010, 116). In opposition to the linear progressions and static binaries that characterise technocratic approaches to statebuilding, social structural accounts

privilege deviation, variation and alterity. By inserting complexity as a foregrounded principle, statebuilding actors establish the basis for a heightened heterogeneity and variation. The 'cultural', 'informal' or 'social' appear as complicating factors that limit, or at the very least complicate, the predisposition to generalise across different contexts.

Social structural approaches therefore bring into question the very basis of statebuilding interventions. Statebuilding actors should not be concerned with making the reality approximate to an ideal; rather, they should instead begin from a refusal of the predetermined or foreclosed. De Guevara therefore conceives a 'process-orientated' approach that originates within the insight that 'statebuilding's effects [unfold] in contingent, contradictory and often unintentional and unconscious ways' (2010, 116). De Guevara's contribution finds an echo in Migdal's and Schlichte's call for a 'process-orientated, dynamic conception of the state' (2005, 16).

This 'process-orientated' conception serves as a belated acknowledgement of the fact that external actors do not engineer change within post-conflict contexts; on the contrary, in many instances they are cast in a responsive role, adjusting to unforeseen developments. External actors do not engineer change, aligning the individual context with their own preferences and designs. Zürcher (2011) goes as far as to suggest that it is optimal to *begin* from an analysis of how external frameworks are subverted and negotiated in the course of post-conflict intervention (also see Englebert and Tull 2008, 110). The significance of intervention is fundamentally altered in the process, changing from the exertion of influence from without to the negotiation of this influence from within. The hybridity branch of the peacebuilding literature (see Richmond and Mitchell 2012; Belloni 2012; MacGinty 2010) is an instructive reference point in this respect, highlighting the fact that negotiation and deviation is an attribute, rather than unfortunate or unintended consequence.

In the contextuality chapter I will discuss how liberal actors have come to terms with this insight, rejecting generic models of statebuilding in the process. By virtue of this adjustment, context has emerged as a central problematic of statebuilding practice – the question of how it can engaged, incorporated and developed has become one of the most pressing challenges for statebuilding actors within a range of contexts. As I will seek demonstrate in more detail, this

process has not been straightforward and has been accompanied by considerable tension or contradiction. Richmond has similarly detailed a fundamental ambiguity, in which international actors have attempted to homogenise, essentialise or instrumentalise the local (2011 46). The contextuality chapter explores this theme in more detail, bringing out the problematic encounter between liberal peacebuilding and local context in more depth and detail.

## **Conclusion**

In the initial stages of this review, I situated contemporary peacebuilding within its broader political, historical and institutional context. I then described the internal components of peacebuilding, while simultaneously its general attributes (specifically its liberal character and technocratic predisposition). The initial stages of the chapter provided an important accompaniment to the introductory chapter, bringing out important attributes and features in clearer detail.

In acknowledging these general attributes, I suggested that Liberalism was the most important, being so closely associated with contemporary peacebuilding as to be essentially co-terminus with it. Three separate layers were duly established, with peacebuilding mapping onto liberal peacebuilding which in turn mapped onto the liberal peace. The first three sub-sections outlined the context in which post-conflict peacebuilding emerged, traced some of its core progressions and also detailed some of the core features and attributes of liberal peacebuilding.

Having defined the central object of critical engagement, I then sought to bring out core contradictions and tensions in more detail. Critical perspectives were essential in this respect, providing a tool that could be applied to the immediate task-in-hand. These critical contributions helped me to bring out themes that will be engaged and discussed in more depth in the empirical chapters: the instrumental adaptation of local agency and contextual specificity will, to take two examples, be discussed extensively in later stages of this thesis.

In many respects, my essential concern is to engage with the question of how liberal peacebuilding has engaged with critical insights, with a view to

tracing and bringing out resultant tensions and contradictions in clearer perspective.

The second part of the review accordingly sought to highlight a number of the tensions deeply embedded within liberal peacebuilding. Disciplinary liberalism directly challenged one of the grounding assumptions of liberal peacebuilding – namely that it is concerned with the absencing or restriction of external influence and interference. My discussion of the disciplinary or regulatory implications of liberal peacebuilding offered precisely the opposite conclusion: that the integration of domestic actors into these broader frameworks actually reinforces and recalibrates various forms of discipline which operate across the internal-external divide.

The following two sub-sections (Critically Engaging with Statebuilding and Critically Engaging with Complexity) then discussed further tensions within liberal peacebuilding. By situating themselves in direct opposition to liberal peacebuilding's predisposition to depoliticise, externalise and technocratise, these contributions anticipated an analysis of the contextual, political and social. Each of these points of engagement, I suggested, needed to be complemented by an analysis of power, an analysis so transparently lacking within liberal representations, justifications and rationalisations. This is the core contribution of the following chapter.

Any analysis of the forms of power that adhere within liberal peacebuilding must begin with the question of freedom. Liberal peacebuilding does not attempt to directly control; rather it operates indirectly, subtly guiding and orientating local actors. Crucially it represents a refinement, rather than absencing (as in classical liberalism) of government. As Foucault recognised, liberal technologies of government represent a refinement and advancement of government, inaugurating more efficient and productive exertions of external power. The 'free' agency of domestic actors does not therefore represent the point at which power is limited; quite the contrary, it instead provides the means through which it is enabled and put into effect.

This concern with forms of power that operate through and within the condition of freedom suggests that a Foucauldian framework of analysis is appropriate. Foucault enables an inversion of the binary oppositions that underpin liberal peacebuilding - freedom in opposition to power, power in

opposition to knowledge. His work provides a sophisticated analysis of liberal power, enabling us to unpick its various dimensions and exertions. By perceiving liberal peacebuilding through a Foucauldian lens, we come to understand how freedom, power and knowledge function as the respective components of a liberal governmentality. The next chapter will further develop Foucauldian insights and perspectives, with a view to establishing the basis for a critical analysis of liberal peacebuilding.

## **Chapter Two**

# **A Foucauldian Critique of Liberal Peacebuilding**

### **Introduction**

In the preceding chapter I introduced and developed critical insights, demonstrating how they establish the basis for an analysis that is directed towards the contradictions of liberal peacebuilding. This chapter adds a Foucauldian ‘accent’, demonstrating how this author’s analysis perfectly maps onto liberal governmentalities and technologies of government (of which liberal peacebuilding is but one instance).

Foucauldian analysis of a particular style of liberal government and the condition of subjectivity enable us to bring together freedom, power and knowledge. Under different circumstances, in which the observer is beholden to liberal tenets, each of these elements would be conceived and understood in their mutual opposition: freedom in opposition to power: power in opposition to knowledge. The peculiar significance of Foucault’s contribution therefore originates within his inversion of these binary distinctions, an act which establishes the basis for a novel and sophisticated analysis of power and its associated exertion.

The so-called ‘local turn’ (Richmond and MacGinty 2013) has been one of the most significant developments within peacebuilding theory and practice. This ‘turn’ has contributed to a fundamental re-evaluation of the core-tenets of peacebuilding theory and practice, resulting in the elevating and privileging of local priorities and the attenuation of external influence. However, as I seek to demonstrate, this limitation does not correspond to an absencing of power; quite the contrary – it instead represents a rationalisation.

Foucault’s contribution is particularly important because it enables us to break with the problem-solving, managerial and technocratic biases that are deeply rooted within liberal peacebuilding. As Jonathan Joseph correctly observes, a more sustained engagement with Foucault’s body of work enables ‘[liberation] from complicity with managerial and depoliticising programmatic epistemes’ (Joseph 2010, 202). The ‘local turn’ therefore demands an analysis of how concepts such as ‘empowerment’, ‘ownership’ and ‘participation’ are often tied up, in ways that are sometimes unclear or undefined, with external

forms of mediation, a development embodied within Simons's observation that 'every empowerment of individual subjects [has been] matched by the growth of subjectifying capacities of government' (1995, 47, 50).

This suggests that the 'local turn' represents a refinement in the practices of government, embodying the more effective exertion of government through various conditions of freedom (empowerment, participation, ownership etc). This raises the danger that the 'local turn' has become incorporated into wider managerial and strategic designs, a danger which Oliver Richmond anticipated when he distinguished between the local and the 'local-local'. In continuing to hold out the prospect of a more authentic engagement with local actors, Richmond reiterates that the liberal peace's engagements with the 'local' have produced inherently disappointing results: in all too many instances, he suggests, the 'local' has corresponded to little more than a 'liberally projected artifice of elites and civil society' (2011, 14). Richmond further explains that peacebuilding actors 'construct the local in a positive sense as supporting the liberal peace framework, but in actual fact they distance the local from international peacebuilding for governmental purposes relating to security, rights and institutions, with needs, justices, culture and identity often ignored' (2011, 59).

Even as it extends an open hand of invitation to local agency, the liberal peace remains possessed of the desire to guide and orientate; its envisaged 'freedom' serves as a perpetuation of power through other means. This clearly recalls Foucault's depiction of liberal governance, which he presented as the 'considerable extension of procedures of control, constraint, and coercion which are something like the counterpart and counterweight of different freedoms' (2010, 67). Foucault therefore clearly rejected a deeply rooted liberal tradition which had opposed freedom to power. In proceeding along the same path, Barbra Cruikshank, the democratic theorist, had previously demonstrated the essential dualism at the heart of empowerment. Relations of empowerment, she suggests, are simultaneously defined by: a) local or external expertise; b) the democratically unaccountable exercise of power (embodied in the relationship between the empowering and the empowered); c) knowledge of the empowered; d) relations that are both coercive and voluntary (1999, 72).

In this chapter I develop this interrelation of freedom and power to argue that empowerment, participation and ownership are governmental technologies that interpolate the subject within wider power relations. I initially begin with a general theoretical analysis, which seeks to unravel the interrelation of freedom, knowledge, power and government. I then attempt to demonstrate how this general theoretical discussion can be related to the specific attributes of liberal peacebuilding. Ultimately, my intention is to establish an analysis of a liberal form of power that operates through and within various conditions of freedom. My intention is not to engage this apparatus at an ideological level of analysis; rather, I instead propose to bring out its disciplinary and regulatory implications in fuller detail. These themes will be brought out in fuller detail in subsequent empirical chapters. The deepening chapter will illustrate the persistence of managerial and technocratic overtones; the contextuality chapter will demonstrate the 'lag' of externalised and generic reference points; while the complementarity chapter will highlight the securitisation of democratisation and development.

Before engaging in a sustained discussion of Foucault's work, I should first clarify that it is not my intention to provide a prolonged exegesis of Foucault's work or engage in a systematic analysis of his different textual products. This chapter instead applies Foucault instrumentally – its core concern is to demonstrate how Foucauldian concepts and themes can be applied to a specific attribute of international relations, specifically post-conflict peacebuilding.

Aside from being justified by the immediate task at hand, this application of Foucault's work could also be justified as distinctively 'Foucauldian'. Shani has previously advanced the argument that attempts to impose an artificial coherence upon Foucault, or to reduce his work to a set of authoritative interpretations which are grounded within an 'appropriate' reading of core texts, are inherently flawed. He has suggested that 'Foucault must be defended against attempts to colonise his work and render it intelligible, systematic and coherent' (2010, 210).

I interpret this to mean that any attempt to salvage a 'true' or 'genuine' Foucault (in much the same sense as critics and historians present an 'authentic' Marx) is a wholly redundant enterprise which is, by virtue of its own



inherent contradictions, doomed to failure. This has clear implications for the approach that I will adopt in this chapter, which is to selectively identify those aspects of his work that can be used to examine attributes or dimensions of post-conflict peacebuilding. In developing and applying Foucauldian insights, I will therefore focus primarily upon *Discipline and Punish*, some of Foucault's College de France Lectures and edited collections and anthologies of Foucault's work. When I reference the peacebuilding literature, I very clearly distinguish between authors who offer an explicitly Foucauldian analysis (such as Laura Zanotti) and authors who instead count Foucault as one among a range of influences (such as David Chandler and Mark Duffield). My discussion of Foucault's work will intermittently draw upon broader frameworks of reference, referring to contributions from critical theory, critical development theory (Kothari 2001; Mosse 2001, 2004; Abrahamsen 2004) and democratic theory (Cruikshank 1999).

This chapter progresses and develops in five stages. First of all, it identifies two objects of critical engagement: the technocratic and liberal attributes or dimensions of post-conflict peacebuilding. It then engages, at a theoretical level of analysis, with themes of power, knowledge and freedom; in engaging each of these points, I bring out the respective components of a distinctive liberal governmentality. After establishing the theoretical basis, I then demonstrate how Foucauldian perspectives can sustain a critical analysis of post-conflict peacebuilding. The fourth part of the review demonstrates how the contribution of Lene Hansen, an IR theorist whose work broadly operates within a Foucauldian/post-structuralist framework of reference, can provide the basis for a critical analysis of core policy texts. A conclusion then briefly summarises the key issues and themes engaged over the course of this chapter.

## **Two Objects of Critical Engagement: The 'Local Turn' and Technocracy**

In the literature review chapter, I argued that liberal peacebuilding could be traced back to three key influences: liberalism, peacebuilding theory and technocracy. The influence of peacebuilding theory has been evidenced within the proposition of a 'deepened' or substantive democratisation. The OECD, as one of the foremost international institutions with responsibility for helping to

embed 'good' peacebuilding practice (OECD 1995, 1995b, 1996), has helped to promote and consolidate democratic values. Previous OECD guidelines clearly establish that:

Development interventions in support of dialogue and negotiation must avoid seeking to impose externally generated solutions. They must continually discipline themselves to help create the space within which parties to a conflict may themselves explore solutions, and work together to build peace and good governance. (1997, Point 183)

This quote (also see Fraser, 2005) explicitly voices the proposition that external actors have come to understand the limitations of external power and influence. The essential inference of 'discipline' is that this limitation has become internalised, to the point where external actors no longer seek to prescribe or implement solutions. In contrast to the proposition that post-conflict peacebuilding remains defined by an essential exteriority (see Engelbert and Tull 2008, 134; Heathershaw and Lambach 2008, 273); Richmond 2004; Marshall 2008, 4; Lemay Herbert 2009, 22), these contributions instead suggest that it is endogenous, taking root within the conflict-afflicted society. This reinvents peacebuilding as an almost organic process, that is both defined and enabled by the absencing of external determinants. The agency of local actors is accordingly enhanced, to the point where 'minimalist' frameworks of democratic engagement (see Bermeo 2003, 153-154) are now scornfully disavowed and swept aside. Popular engagement is no longer constrained to specific institutional innovations, but instead addresses itself to the broad project of societal reform. As the Literature Review has already explained, the emergence of this site of democratic engagement is far from unimportant or irrelevant; rather, it envisages a whole new level of democratic engagement.

Whereas the democratic commitments of the liberal peace are openly acknowledged and indeed celebrated (not least by its own adherents), its technocratic components appear as a perhaps less celebrated, if no less pronounced, concern. Perhaps in acknowledgement of Richmond's 'local turn', MacGinty speaks of a 'technocratic turn' that originated within a prior 'bureaucratic imperative' (2012, 87). This 'turn' is embodied within a substantial technocratic apparatus that aspires to 'transparency, efficiency and accountability' (MacGinty 2012, 290). In referencing its epistemic component, Fetherston relates a 'progressive linearity of knowledge' (2007, 199) while

Mosse, with reference to development practice, invokes a 'managerialist language of linear progressions, inputs and outcomes' (2004, 146). Couzens Hoy, meanwhile, relates '[a] scientific-realist view [in which] the replacement of [an] earlier, false theory by a later, true one, [culminates] in a cumulative progression toward a clearer view of things as they are' (Couzens Hoy 1986, 6). Knowledge, it is anticipated, is the condition that will enable a fuller reconciliation of theory and practice, ironing out irregularities and establishing the basis for optimal peacebuilding outcomes (DfID 1997, 48; Smith 2004, 56; Kartas 2007, 15), providing the basis for models and frameworks which can be generalised across different contexts (Paris 2002, 654, 655; Paris and Sisk 2009; 1-2; Ammitbøll and Torjesen 2007, 11; Woodward 2009, 47). In short, technocracy underpins the 'perceptible trend towards the standardisation of approaches to conflict analysis' (MacGinty 2012, 300) and the aspiration towards a transferable knowledge (Berger 2007, 21).

However, other observers have viewed the advance of the technical horizon with varying degrees of trepidation. Donais critiques a technocratic mentality in which 'local perspectives are more often viewed as hurdles to be overcome or obstacles to be avoided than as potential sources of sustainable solutions' (2009, 8; see also Heathershaw and Lambach 2008, 272). Hameiri, meanwhile, relates the essential exteriority of technocracy (2010, 22). Both critical theorists and Foucault converged upon a shared concern that technocracy had disciplinary implications. Centro defines technocracy as the '[imposition] of a single, exclusive policy paradigm based on the application of instrumentally rational techniques' (1993, 314) while Mosse observes that, in the last analysis, it ultimately aspires 'order, [the] systematic, [the] rule [and the] rule or principle' (2004, 134).

In each contribution, there is a clear sense of delimitation and the denial of human and social potentiality. There is a clear echo of Marcuse's *One-Dimensional Man*, which had similarly warned of the consequences, both human and social, that would be brought about by the advance of technical reason. An echo of this seminal work is found within MacGinty's allusion to a 'closed logic of the technocratic system that simultaneously rationalises, conditions and coerces' (2012, 289). This 'closed' logic ultimately leads in the direction of 'an authoritarian political framework' (Centro 1993, 308) and 'an

advanced society that makes scientific and technical progress into an instrument of domination' (Marcuse 1964, 16).

## **A Foucauldian Analysis of Power, Knowledge and Freedom**

A Foucauldian analysis demands the effective inversion of an established tradition of Enlightenment thought, in which power is placed in opposition to freedom. Freedom, for this tradition, is a means through which power is resisted and denied. This core tenet of Enlightenment thought remains as influential as when it was first expounded; upon engaging with the peacebuilding literature, for example, we have previously encountered the proposition that local actors can be empowered in a way that addresses and overcomes deeply embedded inequalities of power. Edward Newman, for example, suggests that empowerment will shift 'the strategic enterprise [of peacebuilding] activities from a deductive, structural perspective to an inductive, process-driven one. In his view, this will 'bring local priorities to the fore, rather than subjecting them to donor priorities' (2003, 271).

Rita Abrahamsen has also noted the persistence of this tradition within the development literature. She notes that in 'defining power primarily as domination, and as the antithesis of freedom, the existing literature [on participatory development] tends to perceive partnerships either as a way of abolishing, reducing or "taming" power by subjecting it to contract' (2004, 1463).

Here Abrahamsen draws attention to an oppositional agency, in which it is situated in opposition to established concentrations of power. This agency is conceived in constitutive or relational terms. It is also clearly emancipatory or transformative in character. The 'freedom' which is invoked by peacebuilding actors is therefore essentially ideological in form. Foucault, in emphasising the fact that freedom was produced, rather than concretely realised, insisted that this freedom was an attribute and manifestation of power; as such, it could not be conceived or situated in opposition to it. David Chandler similarly insists upon this constitutive dimension when he relates interventions that 'appear to be consensual rather than coercive, through which the technologies and practices simultaneously produce or constitute the subjects being dominated through the discursive practices and frameworks of knowledge, meaning, norms and values' (2006, 15).

In consciously inverting the established liberal tradition, Foucault insisted that 'liberalism must produce freedom, but this very act entails the establishment of limitations, controls, forms of coercion, and obligations relying on threats' (2010, 63, 64). Burchell further clarifies that Foucault's analysis of liberalism was 'pitched at the level of its practice as a critical reflection on governmental reason. It is not an analysis of liberalism as a theoretical doctrine, a utopian dream, an ideology or a collection of particular governmental policies' (1991, 143).

Foucault was therefore concerned with the question of how power is exerted through and within the condition of freedom. This implies a particular style of government, which does not seek to constrain or delimit, but which rather induces and works through the agency of individual subjects. Freedom, in the Foucauldian understanding, is the condition and effect of power (Couzens Hoy 1986, 139) and a correlate of government (Duffield 2007, 4). Power is not visible, concentrated or exerted at a specific point (as in the legal-judicial tradition); rather, it is exerted in subtle and insidious ways; power is not external to the subject, but the subject is instead constituted within power, 'various discursive practices and systems of knowledge' (Joseph 2012, 67).

It is essential to appreciate that, with liberal governmentalities, power is not a denial or restriction; in this form, it operates through and within the 'free' agency of individual subjects; government can, to this extent, be defined as a 'relationship of power that [does] not act directly and immediately upon others' (Faubion 1994, 340, 341; Cruikshank 1999, 41, 102). If we are to fully grasp the significance of liberal technologies of government, it is essential to attain an understanding of the ways in which 'power [operates] through the modality of freedom' (2010, 59). The converse also applies: 'this freedom, both ideology and technique of government, should in fact be understood within the mutation and transformation of technologies of power' (Foucault 2010b, 48).

In drawing upon the work of Friedrich Nietzsche, Foucault insisted that frameworks that sought to deny or limit power were essentially means through which power was further reinforced or circulated. This insight can be applied to both liberalism, which presents a range of techniques through which power can be mitigated or qualified, and technocracy, which presents itself as a neutral or apolitical embodiment of an objective and universal 'truth'.

In addition to these reference points, Foucault's critical project was also directed towards a legal-juridical tradition which held that power could – through the application of various devices and mechanisms – be subject to limitation or constraint. For Foucault, this tradition, which had a profound and lasting impact upon liberalism, was profoundly flawed because it occluded a whole range of power relations. As he observed: 'Disciplinary power [is] exercised through its invisibility; at the same time it imposes on those whom it subjects a principle of compulsory visibility' (Foucault 1979, 187)

Foucault's *Security, Territory, Population* (2009) explored the progressive development of power, distinguishing it, with close attention to overlaps and continuities, into its pastoral, state (*raison d'état*) and naturalised forms. At each of these points, Foucault stressed the existence of forms of power that could not be collapsed into legal-juridical mechanisms and forms, thereby reiterating the co-existence and exertion of a whole host of ancillary powers which remained unacknowledged in their true implication and significance (see also Zanotti 2005, 463). Power, Foucault therefore reiterated, should be understood to be 'distributed, dynamic and nodal' (Paras 2006, 64). In stressing the creative character of this power, Foucault consciously rejected a legal-juridical tradition which equated power with the ability to constrain, restrict or punish. Mark Bevir clarifies that: 'Foucault wanted to modify our negative concept of power, as something that represses, by stressing how it also can act positively to produce and to define' (1999, 349).

This theme of 'positive power' is perhaps most clearly brought out by Foucault's discussion of subjectivity, receiving its clearest articulation with the influences that produce and cultivate the self. The self, Foucault reiterated, did not exist outside of, or beyond, discourse, but was instead constituted through and within it. Dillon goes as far as to suggest that the very appearance of a preformed subject is itself an effect of power (2004, 78). Barbara Cruikshank, in adopting a noticeably Foucauldian vernacular, speaks of 'voluntarily applied technologies of selfhood' (1999, 102). Here it is important to acknowledge that the self is not cancelled or annulled by power; rather, autonomy is the precondition for the exertion of these powers, a feature which brings to mind Richmond's allusion to 'agencies of both emancipatory and repressive character' (2010, 200)). The 'autonomous self' therefore presents an object that

is divided into two parts: a 'subject who is both subject to someone else by control and dependence, and tied to his own identity by a conscience or self-knowledge' (Foucault 1982, 212).

A casual encounter with the peacebuilding literature more often gives rise to a very different interpretation of autonomy. Paris and Sisk, for instance, suggest that peacebuilding interventions are ultimately directed towards the establishment of 'autonomous institutions' (2009, 1-2); Paris, meanwhile, relates interventions under the peacebuilding rubric which seek to 'bolste[r] the effective sovereignty of peacebuilding host states' (2002, 654). In both of these contributions, 'autonomy' is a prior status that is concretely realised in the process of peacebuilding interventions. In both its production and final articulation, it is conceived in opposition to external reference points.

Critical contributions to the development literature, in contrast, evidence a much clearer appreciation of the fact that 'autonomy' and 'independence' are constituted within and through external relations and interactions. Abrahamsen, for instance, presents partnership as 'an advanced liberal power that works through promises of incorporation and inclusion' (2004, 1453). This brings to mind Richmond's denunciation of instances in which ownership is 'determined by international ideals and capacity, not by local consensus, but rather by local compliance' (2012, 358). Donais (2009, 6) draws a similarly sharp distinction between 'cosmopolitan' (in which 'local actors [take] ownership over a largely predetermined vision of peacebuilding' and 'communitarian' (which implies a 'far more substantive vision of local ownership') forms of ownership.

Within this liberal governmentality, freedom, knowledge and power are not mutually opposed, but instead appear as the respective components of an ensemble. Foucault successfully captured this dimension when he described governmentality as an attempt to 'arouse, to facilitate, and to laissez faire, in other words to manage and to no longer control through rules and regulations' (2010b, 353). The concept of governmentality therefore enables us to escape the tight embrace of the legal-judicial tradition, ultimately progressing analysis towards an understanding of how '[e]conomic freedom, liberalism [and] disciplinary techniques are completely bound up with each other' (2010, 67). Jonathan Joseph, whose work has sought to apply the concept of governmentality to international relations, has similarly spoken of a

governmentality that 'takes political economy as its method of intervention' (2012, 52-53).

In direct opposition to ideological renderings of neo-liberalism, which instead posit an absenting of government, Joseph instead conceives of economic processes and relations as political technologies that subtly interpolate the subjectivity of domestic actors. Even within neo-liberal systems of governance, which are ostensibly predicated upon the mitigation or removal of government, it is therefore the case that governmental intervention is 'no less dense, frequent, active and continuous than [in any] other' (Foucault 2010, 145).

Foucault was not strictly concerned with freedom or the liberal subject; rather, he was more preoccupied with the question of how both were constituted. Foucault was clearly aware of the fact that the liberal self was not an essentially prior form concretely manifested in practice; quite the contrary, it was instead the product and attribute of a positive power.

Foucault's attention was not therefore directed towards the unitary, ahistorical or reified subject that was the basis and derivative of the liberal tradition. It would perhaps be more accurate to suggest that his interest only extended as far as taking it apart. Bevir acknowledges this imperative when he observes that the subject does not present itself but is instead the product of 'social structures, epistemes, discourses or something else of the sort' (1999, 347). The constitutive process – that is, the ways in which the subject is 'shaped, guided and moulded into [an actor] capable of responsibly exercising [freedom]' (1999; 157) – is the primary preoccupation for a Foucauldian analysis.

The central concern for liberal governance is therefore to establish the conditions under which the agency of the 'free' agency can be most effectively managed. This is a key preoccupation for Jonathan Joseph, as embodied by his close attention to technologies that 'operate from a distance' (2012, 12). Joseph observes that the concept of governmentality 'fits perfectly with ideas like competitiveness (especially emphasising its artificial, constructed nature), the emphasis on individualised, privatised social relations and the stress on flexibilisation, reflexivity and networked forms of governance' (2012, 48). To put it slightly differently, the concept of governmentality provides an important



insight into a 'new form of politics' orientated towards 'registers of meaning, evaluation and justification that can guide, induce and enable actors to act in certain ways' (Sending 2010, 3).

Liberal governance does not establish a situation in which the subject exists in opposition to power; on the contrary, it is apparent that when 'power is exercised and political technologies are deployed, individuals are made into subjects' (Foucault 1982, 212). Far from being a 'limiting point' of resistance or denial, the liberal self presents itself as a 'tool of power [and] a product of domination' (Merquior 1985, 108). Closer inspection therefore reveals that the self does not approximate to a 'fixed identity, the realisation of which constitutes freedom' (Bevir 1999, 349).

Whereas liberal ideology presents the subject as its foundation-stone, Foucault instead suggests that it is the end product or consequence. This point was explicitly made when he observed that the subject does not exist as a 'natural, essential entity whose freedom consists in its unlimited expression or teleological realisation [but rather as] a transitory and contingent result of power relations that constitute it' (Foucault 1979, 29). In further extending this point, Richmond insists upon an analysis that does not take the 'self' as a pre-given form, an insight which suggests a closer engagement with the question of how liberal peacebuilders 'produce political subjects or citizens best suited to fulfil their policies, agendas, interests and ideologies' (2011, 12).

Just as with his interrelation of freedom and power, Foucault's analysis of the relationship between power and knowledge sought to invert an established Enlightenment tradition. Foucault explicitly demanded the unequivocal rejection of a 'tradition that allows us to imagine that knowledge can exist only where the power relations are suspended and that knowledge can develop only outside its injunctions, its demands, and its interests' (Foucault 1979, 27). For Foucault, knowledge was clearly implicated within the exertion of power. He made his intentions in this respect clear when he stated,

Insofar as what is involved in this analysis of mechanisms of power is the politics of truth, [I] see its role as that of showing the knowledge effects produced by our struggles, confrontations and battles that take place in our society, and by the tactics of power that are the elements of this struggle (2009).

Foucault's analysis, which was very much indebted to Friedrich Nietzsche, was therefore directed towards the point at which 'Western rationality declar[ed] its autonomy and sovereignty' (Simons 1995, 16). He insisted that the 'will to knowledge' derived directly from a 'will to power' (an insight derived directly from Nietzsche). For Foucault, the fact that knowledge was a 'thing of this world' (Bevir 1999, 349) directly implicated it within the operations and exertions of power (Cruikshank 1999, 2). Foucault anticipated a closer engagement with 'the machinery by which power relations give rise to a possible corpus of knowledge, and [the way/s that] knowledge extends and reinforces the effects of this power' (Foucault 1979, 29). Zanotti, in adopting a noticeably similar vernacular, invokes 'a multifaceted and universally valid technique of rule, a knowledge/power complex that opens multiple spaces of visibility at the national and international level' (2005, 480).

Paras suggests that Foucault sought to achieve a 'frank subordination of knowledge to a power understood in wholly socio-political terms' (Paras 2006, 57). Given that this was his preoccupation, it was perhaps unsurprising that Foucault should seek to fixate upon the human sciences. In contrast to their natural counterparts, the human sciences provided a more fertile point of engagement precisely because they were still immersed in their social origins. Foucault observed:

If one takes a form of knowledge (*savoir*) like psychiatry, won't the question be much easier to resolve, since the epistemological profile of psychiatry is a low one and psychiatry is linked with a whole range of institutions, economic requirements and political issues of social regulation. (Gordon 1980, 109).

From the outset, Foucault therefore clearly distinguished between forms of knowledge which had been able to liberate themselves from their social origins (the natural sciences) and those which had not (the human sciences). It should be recognised, however, that this was not intended to enable the distinction of 'genuine' and 'false' knowledge. Foucault put this question to one side, justifying this course of action upon the basis that he was not concerned with epistemology. For him, such questions were to be clearly distinguished from the issue of how knowledge is made to function. Hansen summarises the essential distinction when she observes that Foucault was less concerned with

the question of what knowledge is than with the question of how it functioned (Hansen 2006, 36).

Kothari, whose analysis of development practices makes extensive use of Foucault, observes that Foucault understood knowledge to be ‘an accumulation of social norms, rituals and practices that, far from being constructed in isolation from power, is embedded in them (or against them)’ (2001, 141). This reiterates that Foucault did not seek to engage with knowledge at the level of its objective truth; rather, his analysis was instead directed towards the question of how knowledge functions as a social practice. The conditions under which knowledge is produced, the ways in which knowledge is deployed in social struggles, the power relations which emerge around knowledge – each of these questions preoccupied Foucault. This interest, and here it is important to note that Foucault explicitly acknowledged the influence of the Frankfurt School, also found an echo within Theodor Adorno’s assertion that ‘critique of society is critique of knowledge, and vice-versa’ (Cook 2004, 71).

Previously the Enlightenment tradition had stood outside of social relations, being preserved in austere and serene isolation. The critical theorists and Foucault now sought to bring it down to a temporal level, to soil its esoteric appearance. In common with critical theorists, Foucault expressed a concern that the rationalisation of society and social thought had assumed disciplinary implications. In direct opposition to the Panglossian naivete of liberal thought, Foucault grimly invoked ‘discourses which, claiming to be under the banner of legitimate science, have in fact remained intimately involved with the micropractices of power’ (Dreyfus and Rabinow 1982, 176; Foucault 1979, 191).

Far from establishing the basis upon which the promise of Enlightenment thought and its associated concepts of ‘reason’, ‘rationality’ and ‘progress’ could be fulfilled, modern forms of knowledge had instead assumed disciplinary implications. Merquior observes that: ‘Underneath its noble ideals of human emancipation, the Enlightenment defined new “moral technologies” conducive to a degree of social control far greater than was the case in traditional societies’ (1985, 90).

In further expanding this theme, Foucault’s *Discipline and Punish* traced the emergence and consolidation of ‘a corpus of knowledge [and] techniques [in

which] ‘scientific’ discourses [are] formed and becom[e] entangled with the practice of the power to punish’ (1979, 23). Hailey further reiterates that: ‘the knowledge embodied in a discourse should not be seen as being representative of a universal truth but rather should be seen as an exercise of power’ (2001, 98). Far from establishing the basis for the advancement of the human condition, the Enlightenment, along with its associated notions of ‘progress’, ‘rationality’ and ‘reason’, instead imposed a range of subtle regulations and disciplines. Duffield, making much the same point in a very different context, has reiterated how freedom and knowledge could become active components in the reproduction of more effective forms of ‘metropolitan monitoring, intervention and regulation’ (2002).

*Discipline and Punish* provides a clear and lucid development of this argument. In place of a progressive humanisation of the French penitentiary system, Foucault instead posited a gradual and incremental refinement of disciplinary techniques; this refinement was guided, in all crucial aspects and dimensions, by the associated development of a practical knowledge.

It should be stressed that Foucault did not view this development as the corruption or betrayal of a sanctified tradition; still less did he view it as an unfortunate outcome which could be mitigated through minor adjustments or amendments. Instead, Foucault spoke of a nexus at which the two elements intertwined. He explicitly observed: ‘Power and knowledge directly imply one another...there is no power relation without the correlative constitution of a field of knowledge, nor any knowledge that does not presuppose and constitute at the same time power relations’ (Foucault 1979, 27).

This is by no means a novel observation; it reoccurs within seminal works of critical theory, such as *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, *Critique of Instrumental Reason* and *One-Dimensional Man*. Fetherston alludes to ‘an apparatus which produces docile social bodies and seeks to establish the disciplinary power of the regime of truth’ (2007, 200). And Marcuse expresses a concern that ‘technical and scientific rationalities had formed a new means of social control [and] delegated the individual subject to the status of functional object’ (Centero 1993, 308; Foucault 2010b, 357).

In contrast, other observers continue to hold out hope of an emancipation through knowledge. Habermas, for instance, distinguishes an

‘emancipatory knowledge interest’ from the ‘technical interest in manipulation and control that characterises the empirico-analytical sciences’ (Chouliaraki and Fairclough 1999, 29). Bellamy, meanwhile, insists upon a clear distinction of ‘objectivist’ and ‘subjectivist’ knowledge (2004, 30, 31).

### **Applying Foucault to Liberal Peacebuilding**

The preceding discussion has engaged with Foucauldian concepts and themes at a general level of analysis. In expounding the concept of a liberal governmentality, it has interrelated democracy, freedom and knowledge. In this sub-section I will now descend to the level of liberal peacebuilding. I first develop the interrelation of knowledge and power; I then engage with the conjoining of freedom of government; finally, I seek to demonstrate how Foucauldian concepts can be applied to the tensions and contradictions of liberal peacebuilding.

In initially engaging at a theoretical level of analysis, I developed the proposition of a power/knowledge nexus – in Foucauldian terms, ‘discourses of truth’ which ‘induc[e] regular effects of power’ (1980, 131). This interrelation can be clearly contrasted with technocratic accounts that are instead premised upon linear progressions. In contrast, a Foucauldian perspective would be more predisposed towards a genealogical analysis, engaging at this point in the expectation that this would bring to light hidden struggles, suppressed alternatives and points of resistance. From this vantage-point, the policy document would not appear a particular point within an incremental progression towards a more completely realised policy wisdom; rather, it would instead appear as a relay, aspect or dimension of power. Hence why he called upon observers to make ‘the technology of power the very principle both of the humanisation of the penal system and the knowledge of man’ (1979, 23).

Upon this reading, the steady consolidation of the body of knowledge would contribute to the refinement of subtle disciplinary techniques. Joseph, in referencing innovations within neo-liberal governance, has referenced the emergence and consolidation of more ‘subtle methods of power exercised through a network of institutions, practices, procedures and techniques which act to regulate social conduct’ (2010b, 224).

This is why Foucault presented knowledge as ‘a functional mechanism that must improve the exercise of power by making it lighter, more rapid, more effective, a design of subtle coercion for a society to come’ (1979, 209). The words ‘subtle’ and ‘lighter’ clearly convey the extent to which freedom functions as a key component within liberal technologies, precipitating the more effective exertion of power. In this context, ‘progression’ takes on a quite different meaning, corresponding to the refinement of disciplinary technologies of the self.

This provides us with a basis upon which we can sceptically engage with the ‘local turn’ within peacebuilding theory and practice. The premise that the limitations of top-down frameworks and mechanisms have been acknowledged, and that peacebuilding actors have ‘learned’ the merits of bottom-up engagement, should invoke a considerable degree of disquiet upon our part. In engaging with previous epistemic progressions, Simons observes that they are associated with a whole range of power effects (1995, 43). This is true of both the ‘local turn’ and peacebuilding more generally – both have given rise to new techniques of surveillance and subtle coercion.

In the established narrative of the comprehensive approach, external actors have ‘learned’ the limitations of top-down management, coming to appreciate and acknowledge their limited ability to bring about lasting change within post-conflict contexts, ultimately contributing to a heightened emphasis upon local capacities and contributions. In evidencing this ability to reflect upon its own internal contradictions and limitations, liberal peacebuilding has found renewed impetus, being reinvented as an open-ended, dynamic and reflexive enterprise.

Foucauldian contributions would enable us to question and challenge this general assertion, along with its associated corollaries. Far from establishing the basis for the fuller embodiment of an ideological ‘self’, the ‘local turn’ would instead initiate and sustain various forms of regulation and oversight (see Mosse 2001, 22, 29), as Hindess acknowledges when he refers to the ‘greatly expanded use of markets, empowerment and self-government as regulatory devices’ (2004, 36); Kartas similarly expounds upon this theme when he relates instances in which ‘[donor] assistance [structures] participation and input’ (2007, 14; see also Campbell 2011).

For Foucault, the percolation of the legal-juridical myth – the ‘myth’ being that power was contained or constrained by formal mechanisms – enabled and sustained various disciplinary technologies and rationalities. The shift from ‘top-down’ management to ‘bottom-up’ empowerment and participation therefore enabled a refinement or rationalisation of power, therefore inaugurating and putting in process novel forms of discipline and regulation

David Chandler (2002, 64; 2006, 26) has previously described how domestic ‘capacity-building’ interventions broadly correspond to this representation; Henkel and Stirrat (2001, 179) argue that participation is a form of governance; meanwhile, Harrison suggests that ‘[t]he governance lexicon of ‘participation’, ‘partnerships’, ‘governments in the driver’s seat’ [is] an expanding remit of intervention which attempts to shape sovereign frontiers in deeper and more pervasive ways’ (2009, 204); Fraser, meanwhile, relates instances in which ‘participation disciplines the national political economy’ (2005, 318). While there is a clear temptation to ascribe transformation or emancipation to participation, it is just as likely that it will reproduce the status quo (Mosse 2004, 80, 96). In further underlining this point, Mosse suggests that there is a clear potential for participation to be subverted from below - that is, by the very actors that are supposed to be the subjects of participation (2001, 97).

Campbell’s (2011) critical engagement with ‘second generation’ peacebuilding is particularly instructive in this respect. He argues that it is profoundly mistaken to speak as though bottom-up innovations mitigate or remove power; instead, he suggests, it is more sustainable to view these innovations as a reconfiguration of power. Participation under these circumstances is not open-ended being instead, to the extent that it is delimited in relation to clear end objectives, functional or instrumental in character. Cleaver, in reflecting upon the ways in which emancipation has become a close correlate of development, observes that: ‘As empowerment has become a buzzword in development, an essential objective of projects, its radical, challenging and transformatory edge has been lost’ (2001, 37).

Empowerment under conditions of neo-liberal governance is inextricably entangled with a range of managerial and technocratic imperatives. In engaging within this frameworks, participants are subtly orientated back towards a range of functional imperatives. Far from envisaging the fundamental transformation of

social conditions, empowerment under these circumstances is directed towards ensuring the 'commitment of those to be controlled' while permitting a 'degree of 'responsible autonomy' within limits' (Taylor 2001, 137; see also Francis 2001, 80). Richmond, upon encountering this emaciated and lacklustre 'empowerment', was ultimately disenchanted to the point of seeking refuge within the 'everyday' (Richmond 2004, 89; 2012; Richmond and MacGinty 2013, 772).

This brings to mind Kothari's observation that: 'even when individuals think that they are most free, they are in fact in the grip of more insidious forms of power, which operate not solely through direct forms of repression but often through less visible strategies of normalisation' (2001, 144). It similarly recalls, with comparable intensity, Henkel and Stirrat's observation that 'the attempt to empower people through the projects envisaged and implemented by the practitioners of the [participatory] orthodoxy is always an attempt, however benevolent, to reshape the personhood of the participants' (2001, 182). In making the same point, Zanotti relates 'international disciplinary mechanisms' that 'prescrib[e] standardised mechanisms for normalising politically diverse [local] situations' (2006, 163). In each of these instances, the meaning and significance of 'freedom' is constituted within the interaction between the local and international.

Cruikshank, in registering the fact that the essential concern is not the reproduction of an idealised 'freedom', observes that her principal concern is to establish 'how [democracy] is done, how it is thought and practiced' (1999, 18). Simon Chesterman, after engaging with the concept of 'ownership', clearly establishes the need for a similar undertaking when he notes that the concept can conceivably be defined in six different ways, which range from heightened responsiveness to direct control (2007, 9-10). The essential task, which is clearly foregrounded within the initial research question, is to establish precisely how concepts such as 'empowerment' and 'participation' are reproduced within policy documents.

Critical analysis should pick at the bridges or joining points to bring out the logical contradictions and tensions that are contained therein. As Pouligny observes, '[m]ost programmes of [civil society] assistance are based on [a] fundamental ambiguity: they pretend to rebuild a "society" or even a "civil



society” while continually reducing this process to highly technical dimensions, depriving it of all political substance’ (2005, 505). Chandler further reiterates the need for such an engagement when he relates a policy of ‘evasion’ in which the immediate point of engagement is empowerment while the broader conceptual framework is technocratic (2006, 20-21, 64). In each of these instances, there is deeply embedded ambiguity, tension or contradiction which virtually demands critical engagement.

The documentary reproduction of local knowledge provides an equally instructive example in this respect. Within the policy literature it is relatively straightforward to find instances in which local knowledge is conceived as a ‘corrective’ to external distortions. Bellamy’s distinction between ‘objectivist’ and ‘subjectivist’ knowledge appears to rest upon this understanding, while Habermas’s ‘emancipatory knowledge interest’ (2004, 30, 31) also appears to hint tantalisingly at it. It is not difficult to find other instances in which the concept is stamped with the sanctified seal of localism.

It is noticeable that this local knowledge is presented within a unitary form. The conditions of its emergence and perpetuation, in contrast, escape sustained attention. A Foucauldian analysis, in contrast, would be more predisposed to disassemble this form, probing at its emancipatory and transformative pretensions. Kothari, for example, observes that it is inherently mistaken to speak as if local knowledge is exclusively possessed by local actors (2001, 141). He observes that ‘what counts as local knowledge is very often the effect of specific kinds of techniques, of power, of regulation, and of normalisation’ (2001, 152). Sounding an equally pertinent note of warning, Jabri addresses a sceptical appraisal in the direction of ‘so-called’ local knowledge (2013, 11).

These contributions suggest that a critical approach should fracture or disassemble unitary forms. From a Foucauldian perspective, concepts such as empowerment, participation and local knowledge should not be conceived in opposition to power. Shahar Hameiri (2010), in demonstrating how such an analysis can be progressed and developed, draws upon Foucauldian ideas to decompose the domestic context: in place of a unitary structure, he offers the domestic context as the intersecting point for a whole host of power relations. A

Foucauldian approach begins, by necessity, with an abrupt rejection of discrete or unitary forms; in their place, it instead inserts a set of relations.

Mohan reiterates that it is necessary to begin with a rejection of ‘bounded subjectivities and [discrete] realms of knowledge’ (2001, 164). Knowledge and discourse are not simply instruments that empower the subject. Rather, as Abrahamsen observes, ‘[power] works through systems of knowledge and discursive practices to provide the meanings, norms, values and identities that not only constrain actors, but also constitute them’ (2004, 1459).

A rejection of ‘bounded’ concepts is particularly important because Liberal peacebuilding is predicated upon a range of binary oppositions, in which freedom is situated in opposition to power and power is situated in opposition to knowledge. The divide between the internal and external is an equally important distinction, establishing the basis for a whole architecture of intervention predicated upon capacity-building, empowerment and participation. Substantial effort has already been committed to the cause of vulgarisation – in the Literature Review chapter sustained reference was made to both the hybridity and social structural branches of the peacebuilding literature. Duffield’s invocation of the ‘governance state’ similarly signals a shift away from hierarchies and ordered distributions, as does Bickerton’s allusion to a blurring of conventional lines of authority and accountability, a development which can be traced back to the ‘decentralised power of multiple external agents’ (2007, 108).

Alterations within neo-liberal governance impact upon the relationship between internal and external levels of governance. Hameiri, continuing on from where Bickerton leaves off, observes that the integration of the post-conflict context into wider governance structures corresponds to a situation in which transnational actors ‘become part of [the domestic state’s] internal governance’ (2010, 96; see also De Guevara 2010, 114). This is but reiteration of the fact that, in the absence of ‘appropriate’ forms of external mediation, ‘local solutions are likely to be problematic’ (Chandler 2006, 50). In one earlier contribution, Chandler suggests that unmediated political agency is not a key object of statebuilding and peacebuilding interventions; on the contrary, it is more likely to be viewed as a problem in and of itself (2002, 53). This conclusion finds a further echo in Fraser’s observation that ‘the [World] Bank and many of the

'constructive critics' find autonomous, democratic development politically unattractive' (2005, 328) and a World Bank report which expresses concerns about the dangers associated with 'arbitrary' state interventions (1997, 99).

## **A Foucauldian Textual Analysis**

This chapter has demonstrated how Foucault can be applied to some of the core attributes of liberal peacebuilding. Although it has put in place the basis for a critical analysis, it has not established a framework that can be applied to policy texts. By virtue of the fact that we are concerned with a Foucauldian framework of analysis, it would not be appropriate to speak of a methodology (this word presupposing an analysis more beholden to the sacred conventions of social science). In place of a methodological template, it would instead be more appropriate to speak of a set of guiding principles which can sustain a critical analysis of peacebuilding policy texts.

Although my analysis takes discourse as its object of reference, it does not correspond exactly to the framework of discourse analysis. It would perhaps be more appropriate to state that it is a critical reading rooted within the principles of a specific approach to discourse analysis. Discourse analysis broadly operates within a post-structural framework of reference and, as such, is well-suited to an analysis which is grounded within Foucauldian principles (it should, however, be noted that Foucault disputed the application of this term to his own work).

In searching for an appropriate framework of discourse analysis, I was guided by the insight that it would, in all probability, be necessary to find a framework that would resemble my own needs and requirements. I sought a framework that was not too restrictive or prescriptive, and which was sufficiently open-ended. This framework needed also to enable me to engage with fault-lines in the text and to bring out understated or occluded tensions. My attention ultimately converged upon the work of Lene Hansen, an IR theorist whose work has engaged extensively with both the theoretical and methodological underpinnings of discourse analysis. Her work was also familiar to me by virtue of the fact that she had previously engaged with themes of conflict intervention, although it should be recognised that *Security as Practice* (2006) was concerned with the challenges and complexities of humanitarian intervention.

Discourse is a conceptual reference point that frequently reoccurs within Lene Hansen's work. She has previously engaged with discursive methodologies (*Discourse Analysis, Post-Structuralism and Foreign Policy* and *Ontologies, Epistemologies, Methodologies*), with the process through which 'security' has been redefined (*The Concepts and Methods of Non-Traditional Security Studies: Suggestions for a Discursive Agenda*) and with the theoretical and methodological aspects of post-structural analysis (*Poststructuralism*).

In *Security as Practice* (2006), perhaps her most significant publication, Hansen attempts to establish an interrelation between the identity and material practices of international relations. In engaging with this question, she begins with the assertion that identity, which is constructed through and within discourse and knowledge, has a clear relation to, and implication for, the practice of politics. In further examining this point, Hansen draws a clear distinction between the 'intra-discursive' and 'extra-discursive' – the latter, she observes, places clear 'external limits upon discourse'. This distinction makes a clear parallel with Foucault's methodological shift, in which he moved from considering the internal dimensions of discourse (*The Archaeology of Knowledge*) to understanding discourse in its relation to the social field and an associated array of relations, tactics and strategies (*Discipline and Punish*).

Hansen explicitly rejects objectivist assumptions: 'language is not a transparent tool functioning as a medium for the registration of data as (implicitly) assumed by positivist, empiricist science' (2006, 16). And she engages the constitutive interactions through which subjectivity is produced, continually stressing the crucial interrelation of knowledge and power. In *Security as Practice* Hansen applies each of these understandings to three separate topics. These are: 1) the intertextual relations that adhere between each given text (while each text is engaged independently, it is accordingly conceived and understood within a broader field of reference); 2) the interrelations between each basic discourse (in addition to structuring the broader discursive field, each basic discourse is also related to its counterparts); and 3) the discursive construction of the condition of subjectivity. As I will now proceed to explain, the last has the closest resemblance to my own engagement.

In tracing these interactions and interrelations Hansen suggests that a genealogical approach, which would enable us to establish a 'history of the present', is appropriate. A genealogy does not encounter or engage a teleology, and to this extent, it does not conceive of its object of engagement as a stage within a more general movement. A genealogical reading is instead more predisposed to engage with relations and interactions that are guided by force and various impositions. In departing from this point, it is predisposed to reiterate contingency and deviation.

By insisting upon the centrality of contingency, Hansen ultimately orientates towards a heightened appreciation of complexity (the *Beyond the Liberal Peace: Engaging with Complexity* sub-section of the Literature Review is also a relevant point of reference in this respect). She rejects positivist approaches on the basis that they are more predisposed to simplify reality; in her view, it is a clear distortion to reduce reality to simplistic causes and effects. Consequently, she advocates an interpretative approach that is more predisposed to understand how (and here the divergence away from explanation is significant) different discursive threads feed into the general framework of foreign policy.

However, Hansen does not merely engage these discursive threads at an abstract level of analysis: she instead attempts to understand how 'extra-discursive' practices feed into, and help to sustain, these discursive representations. In this respect, her analysis recalls Foucault's determination not to engage concepts such as 'democracy' and 'participation' at the level of their ideological reproduction. Similarly, Foucault had no interest in the question of whether the idealised form was realised in practice; rather, he was more concerned with the question of how idealised forms were made to function – a quite different order of analysis. The constitutive process through which the object was composed, as opposed to the object itself, was therefore his predominant focus.

Hansen's approach to discourse is predisposed to engage at points of fracture and breakage, and she explicitly relates the need to engage discourse at its various 'discursive fault-lines' (2006, 48). A critical reading (Hansen uses the term 'methodology of reading') should engage at these points, with the overt intention of destabilising and fracturing privileged interpretations. Hansen

conceives of a critical engagement which addresses the question of how 'discourses seek to construct stability, where they become unstable, how they can be deconstructed and the processes through which they change'.

Hansen's analysis proceeds in accordance with this understanding. She does not therefore direct her attention to unitary objects of analysis; rather, she instead adapts a social constructivist approach to ask how discourse and knowledge construct unified identities. This preoccupation with the cultivation and production of the self clearly recalls and brings to mind Foucault's engagement with various 'technologies of the self'. Although Hansen engages with a range of constitutive influences – social, cultural, historical – she is particularly interested in knowledge and the ways in which it feeds into the production of subjectivity. Her concern with the question of how subjectivity is produced is clearly indebted to Foucault's conception of a 'positive power' which produces and cultivates. In engaging with the construction of identity, she seeks to highlight the essential contingency and the extent to which it is guided and orientated by relations of force. In tracing these interactions, Hansen does not aspire to a fuller realisation or embodiment, rather her constitutive methodology instead directs her attention to points of incipient breakage or rupture.

I will now clarify how Hansen's framework of analysis can be adapted to my own engagement with policy documents. In engaging at this point, it is important to clarify both points of convergence, e.g. where the two research agendas come together, and points of divergence, e.g. where it is necessary for me to alter or amend Hansen's initial framework of engagement. In engaging with both aspects, it is important to remember that Hansen's research approach is not to be conceived as a precise methodology, or as a step-by-step guide.

Although I will broadly operate within Hansen's research framework, it should first be acknowledged that I follow a number of divergences in this respect. The first point of divergence derives from Hansen's engagement with the 'extra-discursive', or material. My own analysis is purely fixated upon policy texts and so it cannot engage with this broader context within which policy is produced. While it does not engage directly with peacebuilding practices, it would perhaps be more accurate to state that it is more concerned with the question of how peacebuilding practices are discursively mediated and

reproduced. As my concluding chapter stresses, this question of the relationship between peacebuilding discourse and practice is a question that would reward further research.

My policy analysis does not engage with the question of intertextuality to any extent. In discussing the emergence and consolidation of a peacebuilding field, my Literature Review chapter had touched upon this theme to a much greater extent. My analysis of policy documents is instead much more concerned with the tensions and contradictions that adhere within individual texts. The question of how texts produce a shared web of inter-subjective meanings and reference points, in comparison, is a question that could only be engaged and developed through further research (again, this is a proposition that I further expand in the concluding chapter).

The two research frameworks do nonetheless converge upon the question of how knowledge constitutes individual subjectivity. In engaging with policy documents, I am concerned with a very specific form of knowledge which is embodied and reproduced within policy documents. The distinctive outlines of the peacebuilding subject are produced within and through this knowledge. Whereas Hansen focuses upon the question of how specific identities are reproduced, I am instead more concerned with the question of how different aspects and attributes of subjectivity are reproduced and rendered. This emphasis is particularly clear in the chapters on deepening and contextuality.

Hansen's rejection of positivist models of social enquiry reiterates that she is not concerned with the question of 'why'. She is not concerned with questions that relate to causation and effect; rather, her emphasis upon understanding suggests an analysis which is more predisposed to ask 'how'. 'How' implies an analysis that engages with its referent objects in their own terms, and which does not seek to reduce them to prior templates or formulas; to this extent, it could be suggested that the purpose of a critical analysis is to complicate or 'vulgarise'. As one illustration of this point, my discussion of contextuality deliberately seeks to challenge the binary distinction that the liberal peace has established between the internal and external.

Hansen's engagement with social constructivism also implies an analysis that actively and deliberately disassembles its objects of reference. Critical analysis, in direct contrast to its problem-solving counterpart, does not seek to

reproduce concepts such as ownership, empowerment and participation; rather it instead seeks to establish how these concepts are produced and put into effect. Cruikshank similarly declared her intention to identify 'how [democracy] is done, how it is thought and practiced' (1999, 18), and in the same manner, Simon Chesterman has also previously reiterated the need to establish which version of 'ownership' is being invoked (2007, 9-10). Both Cruikshank and Chesterman signal the need for an analysis that critically probes and questions the surface invocation of concepts such as 'democracy' and 'ownership'. There is, by implication, a similar need to unsettle rooted assumptions, and to highlight the exclusion or denial of possible alternatives.

With this end in mind, Hansen stresses the need to push and probe at points of instability. Discourse seeks to stabilise and to secure; in direct contrast, Hansen calls for us to engage at the points where 'discourses seek to construct stability, where they become unstable'. This depiction of an incipient rupture or breakage perhaps lies at the heart of Hansen's rejection of teleological readings – she consistently refuses to conceive of ultimate closure. This closely resembles my own preoccupation with unresolved tensions and my rejection of the linear representations of liberal theory and technocracy.

Aside from providing a framework that can be applied to policy texts, Hansen also provides guidance as to how my own analysis can be structured. Taking Hansen's discussion of different models of study as my point of reference, I would be predisposed to suggest that my own study most closely resembles a model one study, e.g. a study which is focused upon policy discourse (Hansen 2006, 53). In adapting this model, I will engage policy texts, with a particular emphasis upon formal policy documents.

In the first three chapters of this study I have looked at critical perspectives that have been engaged by policy actors. In exploring how these perspectives have been engaged and incorporated, I have outlined a policy agenda which converges upon a heightened democratisation (deepening), contextual engagement (contextuality) and engagement with internal contradictions and tensions (complementarity). In each of these instances I engaged with the question of how policy discourse incorporates and responds to its critical counterpart. To borrow Hansen's terms of reference, I have engaged with the question of how 'official discourse encounters criticism'



(Hansen 2006, 54). This concern, which will be elaborated in each of the three empirical chapters, defines my project as a model one study. Hansen provides a further point of clarification when she reiterates the need for researchers to resolve: 1) the number of selves that will be engaged; 2) the intertextual model that will be adopted; 3) the temporal perspective that will be adopted; 4) the number of events that will be engaged. The current study will be a single-self study (which focuses upon the UK's government policy output); it will engage at a formal level of analysis; it will cover an 18-year period (1997-2015) and it will analyse key policy documents.

## Conclusion

At the beginning of this chapter, I identified the generation of freedom (associated with concepts of empowerment, ownership, partnership and participation) and technocratic components of liberal peacebuilding as my key objects of critical engagement. Two key propositions grounded my critical engagement with liberal peacebuilding: 1) that various external imperatives are not only compatible with, but are co-terminus with various conditions and attributes of freedom; 2) that peacebuilding techniques and practices have become closely interwoven with technocratic practices and interventions

In the Introduction, I asserted that a critical analysis must ultimately be directed towards the underpinning, *a priori* components of liberal peacebuilding. Both of the aforementioned attributes, by virtue of the fact that they are so deeply ingrained within the liberal peace, therefore present themselves as appropriate points of critical engagement. The second section then attempted to provide a theoretical basis upon which this analysis could consolidate and develop: it offered an inversion of the binary distinctions that have historically sustained both liberal peacebuilding and liberalism more generally (freedom in opposition to power; knowledge in opposition to power). In achieving this inversion, it demonstrated that each of the three core theoretical reference points corresponds to a liberal governmentality – a distinctive style of government that is exerted through and within various conditions of freedom.

This provides me with the basis upon which I can develop a critique of liberal peacebuilding. The essential purpose or contribution of this critique would be to engage with liberal peacebuilding and to demonstrate the ways in

which it is linked into broader power complexes and relations. In further developing this insight, I then applied Foucauldian concepts and themes to liberal peacebuilding. In engaging at this level I sought to demonstrate how a Foucauldian analysis can be applied to both the technocratic (power/knowledge) and liberal (governing through freedom) dimensions of liberal peacebuilding.

After establishing the general basis for a critical engagement with liberal peacebuilding, I then sought to demonstrate, with reference to the work of Lene Hansen, how Foucauldian concepts and themes can be applied to a critical reading of core policy documents. This established the basis for an approach to textual analysis which will be unravelled in the three empirical chapters, deepening, contextuality and complementarity. This chapter has set out some of the general features of my approach to policy documents; the next chapter will now proceed to clarify how the framework of the comprehensive approach will ground a critical engagement with core policy documents.

## Chapter Three

### Engaging the Comprehensive Approach

#### Introduction

The first three chapters have established the central research question, engaged the relevant body of literature, highlighted relevant tensions and contradictions and put in place the theoretical basis for a critical analysis. They have situated my analysis by placing it within a broader field of conceptual and theoretical reference. It still remains for me to explain how I intend to incorporate the comprehensive approach into an empirical analysis of core policy documents. The previous chapter has made some progress in this direction by adapting and applying Lene Hansen's approach to discourse analysis; however, it now remains for me to illustrate how I intend to establish a critical reading of the given policy documents.

The purpose of this brief chapter is to clarify some of the most important features of the following textual analysis. I will begin by clarifying the meaning of deepening, contextuality and complementarity. The introductory chapter has already engaged them to a limited extent, but it is now necessary to engage them in further depth and detail. As I will subsequently make clear, each term corresponds to an essential innovation *within* the terms of the liberal peace. The proposition in this instance – and here the contrast with critical perspectives should be noted – is that the liberal peace is sufficiently flexible to engage and fully assimilate critical contributions.

As the consequence of a deeply ingrained 'lesson learning' process, the attention of practitioners has increasingly converged upon: a) the limitations of technocratic or managerial approaches, b) the need for a more sustained contextual engagement, c) the need for a more 'integrated' approach to conflict engagement and intervention. Peacebuilding actors have worked towards this framework of reference since the early 1990s, with the consequence that each insight has become interwoven into policy documents, serving as the individual embodiment of a more general policy wisdom.

Deepening, contextuality and complementarity are three of the general attributes of the comprehensive approach. The proposition of a comprehensive approach therefore elicits the expectation that each element will be invoked

within core policy documents. This explains why I do not seek to question the existence or non-existence of a comprehensive approach; rather, I instead to the question of how each one of the three dimensions is discursively reproduced within core policy documents. I am specifically interested in the question of how a specific policy actor has engaged and incorporated critical insights. This in turn enables and sustains an analysis of whether this incorporation overcomes deeply embedded obstacles. The preceding chapter reveals Barbara Cruikshank's intention to discover how democracy is 'thought, done and practiced' (1999, 18). To all intents and purposes, this description also translates to my current engagement; I am concerned with the question of how 'democracy', 'context' and 'integration are 'done' within peacebuilding policy documents.

The concluding phases of the preceding chapter established the foundation for a critical reading. It is now necessary for me, in this brief chapter, to clarify some of the more specific attributes of this approach. Firstly, I will develop the three different dimensions of the comprehensive approach: deepening, contextuality and complementarity. The first two dimensions are fairly self-evident – deepening relates to the discursive structuring of democracy and contextuality pertains to the textual reproduction of context. However, complementarity needs to be clarified in more detail. First of all, I seek to do this by breaking post-conflict peacebuilding down into its component parts of 'democracy', 'development' and 'security'. I then establish precisely what a 'broadened' discursive framing of democracy, development and security looks like. The penultimate and final sub-sections break with complementarity and attempt to justify my emphasis upon a specific actor, the British government, and the relevant period, 1997-2015.

### **Three Dimensions of the Comprehensive Approach: Deepening, Contextuality and Complementarity**

It will be noted that there is a degree of overlap between each of these three dimensions. This is perhaps most immediately obvious with regard to the dimensions of deepening and contextuality. In my discussion of contextuality I will most frequently focus upon the theme of cultural and social heterogeneity; however, this theme can also be enlarged with reference to the relative

centrality of internal and external actors within peacebuilding interventions. The recurrence of a functional or instrumental discourse is also a common concern that unites the deepening, contextuality and complementarity chapters. Each of these three dimensions will now be examined in more depth and detail.

Deepening was initially engaged within the Literature Review, when I touched upon the question of how the peacebuilding literature has engaged with the challenges of democracy promotion. It will be recalled that I distinguished between procedural and substantive accounts of democratisation, and suggested that the progression between the two points could be attributed to 'lesson learning' and the incremental assimilation of peacebuilding theory. Deepening, then, is linked to the proposition that the 'root causes' of conflict can only be addressed through an approach that engages with inequalities and distortions that are deeply rooted within a society.

Contextuality is concerned with the question of how the local or specific becomes incorporated into peacebuilding frameworks. The central premise is that external actors have registered the limitations of attempts to engineer change from without; accordingly, they have become, as part of a general renunciation of generic frameworks and models, more sensitive to the centrality of cultural and social reference points. Heterogeneity therefore become an aspiration and established attribute of peacebuilding interventions.

Complementarity is synonymous with the proposition that each constitutive element of the comprehensive approach is, under ideal circumstances, mutually reinforcing and reproducing. This insight leads into the proposition that it is wholly insufficient to speak of security without reference to democracy, of development without reference to democracy, and so on. This explains the iterative character of previous peacebuilding interventions which, more often than not, reproduced their own internal tensions in subsequent effect (DfID, 1997; 12) (Smith, 2004; 55) (OECD, 2005; 12) (DfID, 2010; 6).

## **First Dimension: Deepening**

In engaging with the democratisation literature, we repeatedly encounter the proposition that a heightened engagement with local actors and agencies can qualify or mitigate ‘top-down’ distortions (Reilly, 2001; Belloni, 2004; Sisk, 1996; Gawerc, 2006; Ahmed, 2007). This contrasts with other instances, in which democracy may be promoted and justified within a technical or functional vernacular (World Bank, 1990; OECD, 1991; DfID, 2009) – that is, as a means through which improved levels of economic and political performance may be sought and achieved.

Democratic deepening is clearly differentiated from this agenda for the reason that it is explicitly justified as a progression beyond technocratic or narrow models of democracy promotion. A substantive democratisation instead implies a closer attention to power inequalities and the concomitant concern of social transformation (DfID, 1997; Bush, 1996; Gawerc, 2006). This is not democratic reform (a term which suggests the close imitation of standards and templates) but rather a deep and pervasive democratisation of social conditions (OECD 2006; Paris and Sisk 2009; Paris 2002).

My discussion of deepening will repeatedly return to three points – firstly, to discursive openness – that is, to the absencing of predetermination; secondly, to the proposition of a progression beyond technical reform agendas and formalised points of engagement; finally, an expectation that both of the preceding features will be intelligible in relation to a wider process of lesson-learning.

## **Second Dimension: Contextuality**

The second condition of the comprehensive approach is concerned with the interface between local specificity and universally applicable models and templates. This encounter suggests a closer engagement with questions pertaining to culture, tradition and knowledge. Upon engaging with peacebuilding documents, we repeatedly encounter the proposition that each of these elements, which are invariably aggregated under the single rubric of ‘context’ are essential components, and even conditions, of successful engagement.

Whereas deepening appears as an innovation that has been made in response to ‘technocratic’ or ‘top-down’ distortions, contextuality instead appears as a response to the criticism that liberal peacebuilding essentially represents an ‘alien’ imposition upon the society in which it is implemented. Barkawi and Laffey, for instance, relate a ‘hegemonic Liberalism [which] define[s] out other historically valid democratic claims’ (1999, 408-409). Lund argues that liberal ideology is deeply intolerant. Meanwhile, other writers (Yannis 2003; Englebert and Tull 2008) draw attention to a lack of reflexivity upon the part of the liberal peace’s protagonists. In assimilating these insights, both the hybridity and social structural branches of the peacebuilding literature have incorporated cultural and anthropological materials into a sustained and coherent critique of the liberal peace (Barnett et al 2007; Milliken and Krause 2002; Lemay-Hebert 2009; Schlichte and Migdal 2005).

The relations between internal and external actors can also be considered with reference to the range of ‘disciplines’ that neo-liberal frameworks impose upon local autonomy. Richmond, for example, has previously referenced a neo-liberal framework of ownership that ‘is predetermined externally, not by local context, history, society, culture, politics or hierarchy’ (2012, 259).

In responding to these criticisms, policy makers have sought to acknowledge the centrality of context, establishing it as the basis for their interventions. The logic and objects of external intervention have been transformed in the process, becoming reconstituted as the cultivation of domestic capacities and capabilities. This shift is evidenced, for example, when development practitioners decisively break with modernisation theory, instead instituting development theory as the basis of their interventions.

### **Third Dimension: Complementarity**

Deepening and contextuality engage at very specific points of the comprehensive approach. In contrast, complementarity operates across each of the three constitutive elements of the comprehensive approach (democracy promotion, development and security). Prior to the emergence of a comprehensive approach, each of these elements had been individually

approached and engaged. The comprehensive approach instead instituted a convention under which each element would be conceived and engaged in its interrelation.

At a practical level of analysis, this establishes a clear problematic of integration – that is, the establishment of conditions under which each element can become mutually reinforcing and reproducing. In acknowledging the centrality of this problematic of integration, Pugh suggests that it is the central challenge that confronts peacebuilders in post-conflict contexts (2004, 39). For observers such as Pugh, integration appears almost as the Holy Grail of peacebuilding, the explanation of past failures and the anticipation of future success.

Complementarity is, in common with deepening, associated with a broadening effect. Integration of each element produces, to this extent, a widening of conceptual and theoretical parameters (European Commission 1997; UN 1992, 1995; Paris 2001). Closer attention reveals that integration and broadening are essentially synonymous (Smith 2004, 55; UN 1999; Ammitbøll and Torjesen 2007, 36). The sustained conceptual and practical engagement of interrelations (OECD 2005, 12; DfID 2010, 6) similarly reproduces a more balanced, integrated or synergised approach to conflict intervention.

A final point of clarification should be added. A potential point of confusion arises from the way that, within the literature, the terms ‘comprehensive’, ‘integrated’ and ‘broadened’ are used interchangeably. This has the potential to confuse because the term ‘broadened’ has different implications when it is used in relation to the first and third dimension (in the first instance it evokes a substantive democratisation; in the third it evokes the potential of a cross-sectoral approach). The term ‘comprehensive approach’ will therefore be used in relation to all three dimension; the words ‘broadened’ and ‘integrated’, in contrast, will only be used in relation to the final dimension (complementarity).



## Three Dimensions of the Comprehensive Approach

Dimension	Associated Development
<b><i>Deepening</i></b>	Progression towards a substantive/deepened framework of democratic reference.
<b><i>Contextuality</i></b>	Reconciliation of internal–external tensions through a heightened assimilation of context.
<b><i>Complementarity</i></b>	Integration of constitutive elements of post-conflict peacebuilding (democracy, development and security), thus overcoming internal tensions and contradictions.

### Complementarity: Practice and Discourse

In touching upon themes of discourse, the first three chapters of this thesis have repeatedly returned to practical reference points. My discussion of this practical field of reference has, in turn, repeatedly addressed its epistemic conditions and correlates. This serves to reiterate that discourse, practice and knowledge should be engaged and understood in their interrelation, being conceived and understood as the respective components of a governing ensemble that situates the individual subject within a range of constitutive relations.

The interrelation of knowledge and practice has been explicitly acknowledged by an OECD document, being clearly invoked within the assertion that the ‘pattern of learning while doing has been established’ (1997, 9). This is an article of faith for international practitioners, being reproduced within their textual products and the array of practical innovations enacted within post-conflict contexts. The conflation of peacebuilding discourse,

knowledge and practice suggests that it would be appropriate to invoke a peacebuilding praxis.

While my own analysis is focused upon the discursive structuring of peacebuilding, it ultimately relates to practical points of reference. In the Literature Review I have therefore already, with reference to the work of Jahn (2007), distinguished between three practical points of reference: democracy promotion, development and security. This distinction establishes the basis for the complementarity chapter, which is explicitly focused upon the discursive encounter, and ultimate reconciliation, of each of these three discursive components. In this respect, this chapter builds upon Heathershaw's recommendation to explore 'multiple discourses of the liberal peace' (2008, 603).

This raises the question of how I intend to distinguish between each of the three reference points. Policy documents may not necessarily refer to the general concept (democracy promotion, development and security) but rather to the individual practices that constitute them. This raises the question of how I intend to distinguish each of the individual practices. Upon what basis can I distinguish a practice of security from a practice of development or democracy?

I should begin by observing that there is a degree of overlap between each of the three individual points. This is to be expected and possibly even welcomed – it is, after all, entirely consistent with the overarching rationale of the comprehensive approach. In registering and acknowledging this overlap, observers still tend to habitually distinguish between each of the components. In the course of 'unpacking' the liberal peace, Heathershaw relates a 'tripartite discursive environment' (2008, 597). This provides the basis for the division of 'pragmatic peacebuilding' (2008, 598) into its respective components of democratic peacebuilding, civil society and statebuilding. Schwartz (2005) uses a slightly different terminology, but with essentially the same meaning, to distinguish between security, representation and welfare. In building upon this tri-partite framing of the liberal peace, I will now attempt to relate specific practices to each of the general concepts. This will then establish the basis for the complementarity chapter, which will attempt to trace the interrelation of each constitutive element. The following groupings list the practices that fall under each constitutive element.

### ***Democracy***

- Reform of domestic political parties • Reform of domestic electoral process
- Improved state–societal relations • Empowerment of socially excluded groups
- Upholding political rights • Improved public participation in governance
- Institutional reform • Heightened accountability of state elites
- Heightened civil society engagement by international and domestic actors
- Improved levels of state responsiveness

### ***Development***

- Technical reform of state bureaucracy • Improved practices of public administration
- Introduction of good governance agenda • Improved provision of public services
- Heightened accountability of public authorities • Public inclusion in service provision
- Institutional reform (legal, political, economic) • Macro-economic and regulatory reform;
- State decentralisation • Poverty alleviation/ pro-poor interventions
- Civil society engagement and empowerment • Sustainable development
- Upholding social and economic rights
- Integration into global economic processes and structures

### ***Security***

- Security Sector Reform (SSR) • Statebuilding activities
- Enforce Rule of Law • Substitute for weak or absent domestic security agencies
- Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration (DDR) training and development of domestic security agencies
- Assisting domestic security actors to function in accordance with international standards/requirements

## **Complementarity: A Broadened Framework of Reference**

Complementarity implies that each of the constitutive elements are no longer understood in isolation. In understanding the interrelations between each of the constitutive elements, peacebuilding actors will move towards a more comprehensive or 'broadened' framework of analytical and practical engagement. In this sub-section, I briefly sketch a 'broadened' model of each constitutive element, setting out the conceptual and theoretical reorientation that has occurred as a consequence of sustained integration.

## **A Comprehensive Approach to Democracy/Governance**

A comprehensive approach to democracy rests upon the understanding that it is more than a limited process of decision-making. In the Literature Review I clearly distinguished two models of democracy promotion. In the first instance, I offered a 'limited' or 'narrow' model of democratic reform which was intelligible in its relation to a precise model (Carothers 1999, 86) and set of associated expectations. This model, which is associated with elections, the accountability of state institutions and electoral arrangements is orientated towards the reproduction of a very specific range of effects.

After describing this model, the Literature Review chapter then turned its attention to a more substantive framework, which is orientated towards a more pervasive (or 'deeper') project of societal reform. Policy actors sometimes substitute the word 'informal', thereby succeeding in situating their interventions in direct opposition to a formal policy process. As Foucault recognised, the pre-eminence accorded to the social or informal is hugely significant, anticipating a whole new horizon of disciplinary intervention.

For purposes of clarification, it should be recognised that this proposition of a progression does not negate or absent the formal policy sphere. On the contrary, the heightened focus upon the informal or social instead corresponds to a shift of emphasis or a change in tenor.

## **A Comprehensive Approach to Development**

A number of the key concepts and themes are expounded within the peacebuilding field have been subsequently (that is, after their full development) extracted and applied. This cross-fertilisation is largely attributable to the heightened pre-eminence of important development actors, such as the OECD and World Bank, within the peacebuilding field. Both peacebuilding and development actors therefore converge upon a shared agenda focused upon techniques of 'empowerment', 'capacity-building' and 'good governance'.

Mark Duffield had precisely this convergence in mind when he referred to the 'radicalisation of development and its reinvention as a strategic tool of conflict resolution and social reconstruction' (2003, 1049). However, it is not merely the external (or real-world) application of developmental techniques that are deserving of closer attention; to the same extent, internal evolutions within development theory have proven to be equally significant. Close attention should therefore be given to the discursive reframing of development as an emancipatory project that is concerned with social transformation.

This has corresponded to a shift of perspective, in which development is no longer perceived from the vantage point of external actors who seek to extend the benefits of external knowledge. Under the aegis of local-level empowerment, development orthodoxy has instead converged on the insight that its primary concern is to provide tools and techniques that will enable local actors to overcome the challenges of under-development. Precisely because development is an endogenous enterprise, the means and ends of development will vary across different contexts. This is why the OECD has asserted that 'there is no advance blueprint' (OECD 1997c, 18). It also explains why the same organisation has asserted that 'the developing country [should be] the starting point for [the organisation of] co-operation efforts' (1996, 14). Development, to put it slightly differently, is an open-ended process and not a prescribed end.

This brings to mind our earlier discussion of post-conflict peacebuilding, which we had previously defined as an open-ended project rooted within social needs and requirements. Just as with post-conflict peacebuilding, development actors frequently endeavour to further the impression that they

have comprehensively rejected top-down frameworks of engagement. Mosse therefore reminds us that it is something of a development axiom that development actors have consciously rejected 'standardised-package, top-down models and development blueprints' (Mosse 2001, 16-17).

Empowerment, participation and ownership are the central corollaries of this development.

This heightened emphasis upon local engagement has also resulted from a recognition that the imposition of neo-liberal reforms has previously produced a range of highly negative social and political impacts. Under these circumstances, economic reform and peacebuilding have been at cross-purposes, ultimately working across and even against each other. It should, however, be recognised that the actual purchase of this conceptual, theoretical and practical reorientation has been limited: more often than not, development actors have sought consolation within the illusions that the tensions and contradictions of neo-liberalism can be overcome through improved sequencing and a heightened sensitivity to individual context.

## **A Comprehensive Approach to Security**

The range of actors that are concerned with the promotion of enhancement of security is one further confirmation of the shift towards a more comprehensive mindset and practical framework of engagement. Just as development is no longer primarily conceptualised with reference to economic growth, security is no longer solely concerned with the enhancement of state security. In both instances, adjustments to the prescribed end objective have in turn opened up space for the inclusion of a range of non-military actors.

In addition to creating the space for wider participation within security debates and engagements, the comprehensive approach also implies a qualitative readjustment of the terms in which conflict is analysed and understood. This reorientation has been ongoing since the early-mid 1990s, when the emergence of 'human security' frameworks brought about a fundamental revaluation of security and the means through which it could be achieved (UNDP 1994; Paris 2001, 97).

Debates within the statebuilding literature have been an important accompaniment to this recalibration of security. Rather than focusing directly

upon the Weberian state, policy actors have instead directed their attention to the linkages and interactions which conjoin state and society. Rather than being conceived as an objective condition, 'security' has therefore been theorised as a derivative of political relations that are internal to the given society, with increased attention therefore being given to politico-military questions. From this perspective, the state's authority is not conditional upon its ability to exert force, but is instead contingent upon its ability to meet social needs and requirements. This is one illustration of how the mutual integration of security, development and democracy has resulted in a 'broadened' understanding of security. In welcoming this development, the International Development Committee (25 October 2006, HC923-1, para 11) has stated that the 'idea of human security should form one of the building blocks for policies towards weak and failing states'.

An 'inside-out' analysis necessitates a clearer appreciation both of the limitations of external knowledge and the potential contribution of local knowledge. Security is a subjective condition which is rooted within the insights and priorities of local communities. Insecurity, by implication, originates within the restriction or denial of human rights and needs (International Development Committee, 25 October 2006, HC923-1, para 7).

## **The British Government and the Comprehensive Approach to Peacebuilding**

The election of the New Labour government in 1997 had a number of important implications for the government's foreign policy. One of the most important was the formation of a new Department for International Development (DfID). The publication of the government's first white paper, *Eliminating World Poverty: A Challenge for the 21st Century*, set out an ambitious development-centred agenda - its domestic significance was underlined by the fact that it was the first white paper on development that the government had published in 22 years. The establishment of the DfID as an independent government department reiterated the government's intention to uphold its commitment to the Millennium Development Goals. In comparison, its predecessor, the Overseas Development Administration, had been part of the Foreign and

Commonwealth Office (FCO). In addition, the 2002 updating of the Overseas Development Act established poverty alleviation as DfID's mandate.

My focus on the British government largely derives from the emergence of DfID and its specific contribution to development approaches that integrate and incorporate an analysis of conflict. DfID has played a hugely important role, both internally and externally, in establishing and further developing the comprehensive approach agenda. *Securing Security Sector Reform*, which was published by DfID in 2002, sets out the respective departmental contributions in more depth and detail. The FCO is described as setting the political framework and the DfID is primarily concerned with the 'governance' context in which the security services operate, including accountability of security services, training and development of policy frameworks. The MoD is responsible for direct military assistance (DfID 2002, 10).

During the relevant period, the DfID developed innovative and flexible responses to conflict intervention, which were applied in instances where state capacity had either degraded or collapsed entirely. In contrast to other development agencies, its interventions were guided and motivated by poverty alleviation and came to be deliberately focused upon weak, failing or failed states. In emphasising the need to work through local capacities and capabilities, it also had an important influence on the international shift away from conditionality.

Although peacebuilding is a cross-departmental concern, the DfID has emerged as the pre-eminent departmental actor in this respect, and the list of policy documents described in this paper further reiterates this point. The work of the DfID's Conflict, Humanitarian Affairs and Security (CHASE) department has enabled it to develop increased levels of conflict sensitivity. This is particularly important because development agencies have historically worked from the understanding that development is subsequent to the establishment of peace; the development of instruments for analysis, such as Strategic Conflict Assessment (SCA), enabled DfID to address and overcome this lacuna within development orthodoxy.

The British government also took a number of steps to enhance 'policy coherence' (DfID 2002, 10). These were not necessarily justified under the heading of the comprehensive approach, but were manifestations of 'jointed-up-



government' (see Short 1999). The Conflict Prevention Pools, a cross-departmental funding mechanism, the Stabilisation Unit, which draws upon the respective contributions of the FCO, DfID and the Ministry of Defence (MoD), and the Stabilisation Unit previously known as the Post-Conflict Reconstruction Unit (PCRU) were important innovations in this respect. All three departments were also parties to a public service agreement objective that committed them to address the structural causes of violence, and to work together to manage tension and assist post-conflict reconstruction (International Development Committee, 25 October 2006, HC923-1, para 60).

The House of Commons International Development Committee previously observed that the British government has clearly stated, in written evidence, its intention to 'combine different perspectives from foreign policy, defence and international development' (25 October 2006, HC923-1, para 60). This interdepartmental agenda was previously reproduced within documents such as *Supporting Security Sector Reform* (DfID 2002) and *Fighting Poverty to Build a Safer World* (DfID 2005). The emphasis on an integrated or cross-departmental approach arose, in large part, from the insight that the challenges of conflict intervention cut across different departments. The attention of policy actors increasingly converged on a range of bureaucratic innovations and mechanisms that would enhance and improve interdepartmental co-operation.

These developments affirm that the debate surrounding post-conflict peacebuilding did not occur in isolation but was part of a broader discussion on how the different stages and phases of conflict intervention could be integrated into a generally cohesive framework of engagement. Each phase, from preventative to post-conflict, and each dimension, economic, political or social, was increasingly understood and engaged in its interrelation. As Simon Lawry-White observes, the British government's approach to the comprehensive approach originates within an understanding that 'sees the origins of conflict as complex, requiring a systematic and joined-up approach that draws in a variety of actors to develop solutions in partnership' (2003, 16). Conflict intervention is therefore a *process*, in which the respective parts are interrelated and conjoined.

Accordingly, the British government has established this framework and is now actively exerting its influence in order to persuade other international

actors to work within a shared framework of reference. In a speech at King's College, Clare Short, then Secretary of State for International Development, observed that the government sought to 'integrate a security sector reform perspective into [the] thinking of other donors and other multilateral development institutions, such as the European Union and the international financial institutions' (1999).

Almost from its inception, DfID therefore perceived itself as a leading innovator that had the capability to guide and lead the terms of the broader policy debate. In retrospect, this self-confidence appears attributable to DfID's self-perception, in which it understood itself to be concerned with the development of 'evidence-based' policy and 'lessons' that could be transferred to other institutional contexts. It is therefore significant that Simon Lawry White's study of British peacebuilding, which was commissioned by DfID, was tasked with assessing the level of 'horizontal consistency' (that is, the level of coordination), between the British government and other international donors (2003, 17). In further recognising DfID's international significance, the OECD has also explicitly acknowledged the department's contribution to the engagement of fragile states (International Development Committee, 25 October 2006, HC923-1, para 31).

## **The Relevant Period (1997-2016)**

Post-conflict peacebuilding first emerged as an important framework in the early 1990s. During the following years, the UN emerged as a key innovator in developing post-conflict intervention capability. However, this gradually began to change as states started to integrate and develop post-conflict intervention capabilities. Over time, peacebuilding has gradually emerged as a collaborative enterprise, which incorporates the shared contributions of international institutions (OECD, World Bank), state actors and sub-state actors (a whole plethora of NGOs and research institutes). If we were primarily interested in UN peacebuilding it would make sense to begin at the beginning of the 1990s; however, as we are instead interested in the question of this framework has filtered down to the state level, then it makes sense to engage at a later point within the decade.

This period is also of interest because it overlaps with a series of important developments in the theorisation and practice of conflict intervention. As I have noted, the terms in which security, development and democracy were theorised and understood had shifted substantially. The election of a New Labour government in 1997 represents the point at which the British government began to engage with these broader developments and assumed a prominent role within international discussions and debates.

Finally, the election of a new government in 1997 also represented the point at which the documentary output of the British government began to substantially increase; a point clearly defined by a 22-year gap between the government's development white papers. A documentary analysis of the government's policy positions prior to 1997 would be extremely limited in scope and implication. While it would perhaps be possible to sustain an analysis of UN peacebuilding during this period, it would not be possible to sustain an analysis of the British government's approach to peacebuilding. The concluding year of the timeframe was chosen because peacebuilding is a continually evolving and continually developing field of reference; by situating the end point in the current year, there is an increased likelihood that our analysis will cover the most recent innovations.

## **Table Overview/Textual Selection**

Table A provides a visual overview of the framework that will guide my critical engagements with core comprehensive approach texts. The table breaks down into each of the three dimensions of the comprehensive approach: deepening, contextuality and complementarity. Deepening and contextuality are broken down into three features; for instance, deepening breaks down into governance, empowerment and local knowledge. Complementarity, in contrast, is engaged with reference to each of the three constitutive elements of post-conflict peacebuilding: democracy promotion, development and security. For deepening and contextuality, each of the three features descend vertically in columns beneath the general dimension. The second column contains the initial framework of reference and engagement for peacebuilding actors. The third column sets out the effect that results from the emergence and consolidation of a comprehensive approach. The fourth column then provides an empirical

example which is related to each given condition. The final column provides a critical reading that interprets each empirical example by relating it back to the purported progression. The purpose in each of these instances is to identify how the given progression is empirically reproduced within core texts.

Table B contains a range of policy documents that were published by the British government during the period 1997-2016. Each of the documents relates either to one of the aspects of the comprehensive approach – democracy, development and security – or to an aspect of the peacebuilding agenda, e.g. statebuilding, governance, poverty-reduction. Documents were primarily identified through online sources and internal referencing beginning with a key publication such as a white paper and then moving onto secondary or supplementary documents that were referenced within this document. DfID documents account for the largest proportion of the documents; MoD and Stabilisation Unit documents are cited to a much lesser extent.

Each identified document was then assessed with reference to a number of attributes: firstly, the number of occasions it was cited within other policy documents; secondly, whether it can be classified as a peacebuilding document (usually documents did not explicitly refer to peacebuilding, but were concerned with issues or themes that had peacebuilding implications); thirdly, with reference to its claim to operate within a comprehensive approach (e.g. whether it references or engages each of the constitutive elements of the comprehensive approach). The fourth, fifth and sixth vertical columns assess the extent to which the three dimensions of the comprehensive approach were engaged in the document.

After assessing each of the texts highlighted in Table B according to these six attributes, I then sought to identify nine texts. The three deepening texts roughly corresponded to the six attributes and engaged with the theme of deepening, touching upon issues such as governance, participation, accountability, responsiveness. *Governance, Development and Democratic Politics* presented itself as an obvious choice in this respect. The three choices for the contextuality chapter were selected on the basis of their close engagement with statebuilding themes and agendas.

Each of these two chapters had drawn strongly upon sources that were concerned with governance-related issues. I therefore sought to approach the

final chapter, Complementarity, from within a security perspective. The three chosen documents – two of which were published by the Stabilisation Unit and one of which was published by the MoD – enabled me to do this. In total, nine texts were selected. Texts that were internally cited were also discussed in each of the chapters; in addition, in a few instances where no texts were internally cited, I identified and extracted additional sources from Table B.

## **Selected Texts**

### **Deepening**

*Governance, Development and Democratic Politics: DfID's Work in Building More Effective States* (2006)

*Building the State and Securing the Peace* (2009)

*Building Stability Overseas Strategy* (2011)

### **Contextuality**

*Why We Need to Work More Effectively in Fragile States* (2007)

*Building Peaceful States and Societies* (2010)

*States in Development* (2008)

### **Complementarity**

*The UK Government's Approach to Stabilisation* (2014)

*Responding to Stabilisation Challenges in Hostile and Insecure Environments:*

*Lessons Identified by the UK's Stabilisation Unit* (2010)

*Security and Stabilisation: The Military Contribution* (2009)

**Table A: Deepening, Contextuality and Complementarity,  
A Framework of Analysis**

Deepening	Established Practical Framework for Democratisation	Reconfiguration of Democratisation Within the Comprehensive Approach	Empirical Engagements With Liberty	A Critical Reading of Empirical Engagements With Liberty
<p><i>Feature One</i></p> <p><b>Governance:</b> Management of social, economic and political processes. Emphasises importance of transparency, accountability and participation within policy-making.</p>	Establishment or reform of formal institutions. Reform of electoral processes. Transference of external templates and models of efficient public administration to individual contexts.	Shift beyond state institutions to engage social and economic inequalities. Particular emphasis upon poorest sections of society and pro-poor development. Participation and empowerment are preferred techniques.	‘We will encourage participatory engagements which take into account the views and needs of the poor, and which tackle disparities between women and men throughout society.’ (DfID 1997, 12)	Clear incorporation of substantive points of reference. The citation plainly moves beyond a procedural conception of democratic engagement. However there are certain ambiguities. Participatory agency is somewhat vague and undefined (‘Take into account’).
<p><b>Empowerment:</b> Broad-ranging and encompassing democratisation which is predicated upon the enhancement of local skills, capacities and capacities</p>	Technocratic conception of empowerment. Engagement is conceived at specific points and in relation to specific functional requirements, e.g. improved policy design and implementations.	Broad-based social participation at all stages of decision-making. Peace-building is an inherently political activity that must be based upon the agency and participation of conflict-affected communities.	<p>‘Participation and impartiality enhance the quality of evaluation, which in turn has significant implications for long-term sustainability since recipients are solely responsible after the donor has left.’ (OECD 1991, 8)</p> <p>‘The challenge is to devolve the decision-making power and control over resources to participants as ‘investors’ or even ‘managers’ who make strategic and operational decisions about how services are designed and delivered.’ (World Bank 1996, 168)</p>	<p>In this first quotation participation is essentially instrumentalised and therefore conceived as a policy input.</p> <p>The second quotation awkwardly collapses rational-choice and participatory concepts into a single framework. Participatory concepts are, by virtue of their incorporation into a prior framework of reference, essentially instrumentalised.</p>

**Table A: Deepening, Contextuality and Complementarity,  
A Framework of Analysis, continued**

Deepening	Established Practical Framework for Democratisation	Reconfiguration of Democratisation Within the Comprehensive Approach	Empirical Engagements With Liberality	A Critical Reading of Empirical Engagements With Liberality
<p><i>Feature Three</i></p> <p><b>Local Knowledge:</b> The sustained and systematic integration of local knowledge enables a more sustained democratisation of existing frameworks of engagement.</p>	Adjustment of domestic processes, structures and systems to external templates and requirements. Intervention guided and defined by external knowledge.	External engagements at level of domestic state will fail without sustained engagement of local perspectives and insights. Peacebuilding actors need to continually engage and assimilate local knowledge.	<p>The OECD argues external engagement should '[help] a society to develop and harness its own expertise'. (1995, 7).</p> <p>'Learning requires listening and requires modesty as well as open dialogue.' (World Bank 1995, x)</p> <p>'The aim must be to build mechanisms to discipline and coordinate the policy debate and call competing policy proposals into question.' (World Bank, 1997; 81)</p>	<p>Accompanying process and contents of 'local' knowledge remain unelaborated. External actors could conceivably 'help' or 'assist' in any number of ways.</p> <p>Ambiguous; role of external and internal actors remains unclear with regard to knowledge. 'Listening' implies that the initiative remains with the external actors.</p> <p>Implicitly coercive; democratic engagement is presented as a means through which domestic populations can be educated or orientated towards 'appropriate' forms of political and economic conduct.</p>

**Table A: Deepening, Contextuality and Complementarity,  
A Framework of Analysis, continued**

Contextuality	Established Practical Framework for Contextual Engagement	Reconfiguration of Contextual Engagement Within the Comprehensive Approach	Empirical Engagements With Spatiality	A Critical Reading of Empirical Engagements With Spatiality
<p><i>Feature One</i></p> <p><b>Internal and External</b></p>	<p>The ‘transition paradigm’ renders the prior expectation that all societies will progress or develop in the same way. Contextual or cultural specificity give way to modernisation.</p>	<p>Recognition and incorporation of local specificity – local cultures, traditions and customs – is essential for successful peacebuilding.</p>	<p>The OECD acknowledges that development programs should be locally owned and adapted to local context (1996, 2).</p> <p>‘Peacebuilding must be responsive to context.’ (Smith 2004, 10)</p> <p>A DfID report (2008) calls for a shift away from the overriding preoccupation with formal institutions and institutional capacity.</p>	<p>‘Adaptation’ suggests the general framework is external but aspects or features can be adjusted.</p> <p>‘Responsive’ is somewhat ambiguous. Context appears as a subsequent consideration.</p> <p>Shift away from general framework and recognition of need to engage with societal specificity.</p>
<p><i>Feature Two</i></p> <p><b>Homogenous and Heterogeneous</b></p>	<p>Successful engagement will establish basis for transferable frameworks that can be applied across contexts. Knowledge and practices can similarly be transferred across contexts. Implies standardisation, harmonisation, integration.</p>	<p>Rejection of one-size-fits-all approaches and templates. Both means and ends must be adjusted to context. Peacebuilding frameworks incorporate and evidence variation and heterogeneity.</p>	<p>‘Given the variety of country situations, there is no single [development] model that can be recommended’ (OECD 1996, 17).</p> <p>‘Constraints exist at the policy level that impinge on the rights of people to organise, access information, engage in contracts, own and manage assets, and participate fully as members of civil society.’ (World Bank 1996, 8)</p>	<p>The two propositions appear to be contradictory. In the first instance, there is a rejection of the proposition that development models can be transferred across different contexts; in the second instance, there is the articulation of a (rational choice) development template which can be translated across contexts.</p>



**Table A: Deepening, Contextuality and Complementarity,  
A Framework of Analysis, continued**

Contextuality	Established Practical Framework for Contextual Engagement	Reconfiguration of Contextual Engagement Within the Comprehensive Approach	Empirical Engagements With Spatiality	A Critical Reading of Empirical Engagements With Spatiality
<p><i>Feature Three</i></p> <p><b>Specific and General</b></p>	<p>External actors should work towards a state that broadly corresponds to Western models and expectations. This imperative corresponds to the Weberian state: A set of formal institutions that possess a monopoly of force and function in accordance with legal-rational norms and expectations.</p>	<p>Social structural or historical sociology approaches highlight the specificity of the state and the various ways in which it is integrated into societal structures and processes.</p>	<p>'Formal institutions need to be adapted to the local culture/ context in order to build the legitimacy needed for enforceability'. (World Bank 1995, 63)</p>	<p>General recognition that formal institutions need to be adapted to local culture. However, the emphasis reverts back to a general attribute of enforceability.</p>

**Table A: Deepening, Contextuality and Complementarity,  
A Framework of Analysis, continued**

Complementarity	Established Practical Framework of Engagement Prior to Comprehensive Approach	Reconfiguration of Established Framework Within the Comprehensive Approach	Empirical Engagements With Linearity	A Critical Reading of Empirical Engagements With Linearity
Progressive integration of each constitutive element mitigates or overcomes internal tensions and contradictions. Each element comes to function as part of an integrated, multi-dimensional approach.	Each constitutive element and its associated practices was engaged individually and not as part of an integrated or comprehensive framework. Democracy promotion, development and security developed as individual fields of engagement.	Integrated and multi-faceted approach to post-conflict intervention.  Each constitutive element is no longer conceived individually but in its mutual relation. The purpose of analysis is to comprehend and practically engage these interrelations.	‘The state has much to do with the question of whether countries adopt the institutional arrangements under which markets can flourish’. (World Bank 1997, 29)  ‘Fostering public participation in the governance agenda is essential to peace-building’. (OECD 1997, Point 123)  In a separate report, the OECD suggests that development should be conceived as a process which will ‘expand participation in the process of globalisation’.	Developmentalism provides lens through which other constitutive elements are refracted. This is shown by the manner in which democratisation is effectively equated with the empowerment of the poorest sections of society.

**Table B: Core British Government Comprehensive Approach Texts, 1997–2016**

Document (DfID Unless Otherwise Stated)	Importance to Other Policy Texts	Relevance to Peacebuilding	Claim to Comprehensiveness	Extent of Engagement		
				Deepening	Contextuality	Complementarity
<i>Results in Fragile and Conflict-Affected States and Situations Guidance</i> (2012)		Peacebuilding and statebuilding are explicitly referred to throughout	Limited engagement with predicates. Limited engagement with constitutive elements. Core focus is on the development of a general framework and approach which works across governmental departments.	Local ownership of evaluation process, contextual analysis, and participatory analysis. Refer to Annex C.	Link between state-societal relations and service delivery. Refer to Annex C.	Limited engagement with securitisation and fragile states. Refer to Annex D. Reference is only made to each of the constitutive elements in the closing annexes.
<i>Interim Guidance Note: Measuring and Managing for Results in Fragile and Conflict-Affected States and Situations</i> (2011)		Seeks to develop an approach that shifts away from conventional development thinking to a more sustained engagement with fragile and conflict-affected states.	Limited engagement with predicates or with constitutive elements. The document is predominantly preoccupied with methodological questions and information-gathering techniques.	Limited. Predominant emphasis is on evaluation of cooperation with partners and participatory planning.	Limited. Predominant emphasis is on evaluation of state-societal relations and engagement with local actors. Adjustment to context is also engaged.	N/A
<i>Building Peaceful States and Societies: A DfID Practice Paper</i> (2010)	Referenced in DfID 2009a/b, 2010, 2012, 2014b.	Explicitly references peacebuilding frameworks and the need to move away from conventional developmental approaches and strategies.	The paper explicitly states that it 'outlines a new, integrated approach that puts statebuilding and peacebuilding at the centre of our work' (6).	Repeated engagement with the question of how local actors should be engaged. Democratisation is a key point of the discussion.	Strong emphasis on local capabilities and state-societal relations.	Reference is made to an integrated approach which engages the various dimensions of democracy, development and security.

**Table B: Core British Government Comprehensive Approach Texts, 1997–2016, continued**

Document (DfID Unless Otherwise Stated)	Importance to Other Policy Texts	Relevance to Peacebuilding	Claim to Comprehensiveness	Extent of Engagement		
				Deepening	Contextuality	Complementarity
<i>Country Governance Analysis: How to Note (2010b)</i>		Primarily conceived within a develop- mental framework. No explicit refer- ence to fragile or conflict-affected states (FCAS).	Only focuses on one aspect of the compre- hensive approach.	Possibly useful in helping clarify some of issues associated with governance.	N/A	N/A
<i>DfID Briefing Paper C: Links Between Poverty, Security and Development (2010c)</i>	Referenced in DfID 2010.	Directly related to peacebuilding themes. Provides insight into the general integrative framework.	Explicitly references the need for a com- prehensive approach or ‘whole-of-govern- ment’ approach.	Little engagement with local-level ac- tors. Predominant em- phasis is upon the government’s ap- proach to post-conflict engagement.	Limited engagement with state-societal re- lations or contextual considerations.	Strong emphasis on an integrated approach that engages across a number of different points.
<i>White Paper: Eliminating World Poverty: Building Our Common Future (2009)</i>	Referenced in 2009OC/DC, 2009a, 2010, 2010c.	Primarily conceived within a develop- mental framework. Aside from Chapter Four, few direct ref- erences to FCAS.	General document only engages with one feature of the compre- hensive approach, al- though Chapter Four engages with the proposition of a com- prehensive approach.	Engages some of the key aspects of good governance and em- phasises international infrastructure for poverty reduction.	Engages with devel- opment partnerships and also discusses civil society/private sector engagement (refer to Chapter Six and parts of Chapter Seven).	Only Chapter Four en- gages with themes of stabilisation and secu- ritisation, however, it provides some useful points of reference.
<i>DfID Briefing Paper A: Analysing Con- flict and Fragility (2009b)</i>	Referenced in DfID 2009e, 2010, 2010c, 2010d, 2012.	Explicitly engages DfID’s policy analysis in FCAS.	Explicitly engages the development of a broad analysis of conflict that engages across a number of points.	Engages with issues that pertain to gover- nance, however, dis- cussion is general.	Discusses theme of contextual engage- ment, with reference to drivers of change framework; however, discussion is general.	Limited engagement with issues of securiti- sation.



**Table B: Core British Government Comprehensive Approach Texts, 1997–2016, continued**

Document (DfID Unless Otherwise Stated)	Importance to Other Policy Texts	Relevance to Peacebuilding	Claim to Comprehensiveness	Extent of Engagement		
				Deepening	Contextuality	Complementarity
<i>DfID Briefing Paper E: Aligning with Local Priorities</i> (2009d)	Referenced in DfID 2009b, 2009e, 2010.	Explicitly engages DfID's approach to FCAS.	Specifically focused on contextual engagement and alignment.	Brief engagement with bottom-up forms of budget support and community-based approaches.	Discussion centres on engagement with local actors.	N/A
<i>Building the State and Securing the Peace, DfID Emerging Policy Paper</i> (2009e)		Explicitly references and defines peacebuilding and statebuilding.	Explicitly references the need for an integrated approach to statebuilding and peacebuilding.	Discussion of political settlements, accountability and 'deepening democracy'. Formal and informal modes of political engagement are also addressed.	Discussion of state-societal relations and civil society engagement. The centrality of state responsiveness is underlined.	Emphasises the importance of 'capable, accountable, responsive' states (CAR). This formulation engages each of the constitutive elements.
<i>Peacebuilding and Statebuilding Framework</i> (2009f)	Referenced in 2009oc/dc, 2009a, 2010, 2010c.					
<i>Measuring Change and Results in Voice and Accountability Work</i> , Working Paper 34, (2009g)	Referenced in 2011, 2012.	Document is not conceived with specific reference to FCAS.	Engages with governance in broad terms, but does not elaborate a comprehensive approach.	Engages with various aspects of accountability and responsiveness.	Discusses civil society engagement but no in-depth discussion of spatial dimensions of peacebuilding.	Does not engage with securitisation.
<i>Re-negotiating Political Settlements</i> , Draft Paper Prepared for DfID by C. Barnes (2009j)	Referenced in 2009e, 2010.	Explicitly operates within a peacebuilding framework.	Largely focuses upon the role of political settlements in establishing state authority.	Engages questions that pertain to governance, establishment of a responsive state, inclusive political settlements, broadened participation.	Focuses on state-societal relations. Engages the question of how the process of negotiation consolidates state authority.	Due to focus on political themes and questions, does not engage with securitisation.

**Table B: Core British Government Comprehensive Approach Texts, 1997–2016, continued**

Document (DfID Unless Otherwise Stated)	Importance to Other Policy Texts	Relevance to Peacebuilding	Claim to Comprehensiveness	Extent of Engagement		
				Deepening	Contextuality	Complementarity
<i>States in Development: Understanding Development</i> Working Paper Prepared by A. Whaites (2008)	Referenced in DfID 2009b, 2009e, 2009j, 2010.	Engages within a FCAS framework.	Conceives of statebuilding as a broad or comprehensive framework.	Discusses statebuilding with reference to heightened responsiveness, functionality and accountability.	Engages with international processes of state formation, state-societal relations.	Engages with themes of securitisation and stabilisation (references work of UK stabilisation unit).
<i>Accountability Briefing Note, DfID</i> (2008b)		Does not operate within a FCAS framework.	Engages with one aspect of the comprehensive approach.	Focuses upon relationship between accountability and effective systems of governance. Demonstrates how empowered can influence policy process.	Demonstrates how accountability relates to process of state formation. Also highlights how range of societal actors can influence this process.	N/A
<i>Understanding State-building from a Political Economy Perspective</i> . Paper prepared for DfID by V. Fritz, and A. Rocha Menocal (2007a)	Referenced in 2009e.	Engages with both FCAS and conventional statebuilding interventions. Distinguishes FCAS as a specific point of engagement.	Statebuilding is conceived as a general approach that engages aspects of security, development and democracy.	Engages questions that pertain to good governance and electoral processes.	Acknowledges the importance of contextual engagements that incorporate local actors. Engages the respective roles of international/national actors and state-societal relations.	All three of the constitutive elements are discussed.
<i>Preventing Violent Conflict</i> (2007b)	Referenced in 2007e.	Stresses the need for ‘conflict-sensitive’ intervention.	The need for an integrated, comprehensive approach is explicitly referenced.	Importance of good governance is recognised. Inclusive political settlements and civil society engagement are discussed.	Very brief engagement with theme of partnership.	Securitisation is not engaged in great depth or detail.

**Table B: Core British Government Comprehensive Approach Texts, 1997–2016, continued**

Document (DFID Unless Otherwise Stated)	Importance to Other Policy Texts	Relevance to Peacebuilding	Claim to Comprehensiveness	Extent of Engagement		
				Deepening	Contextuality	Complementarity
<i>Governance, Development and Democratic Politics: DFID's Work in Building More Effective States</i> (2007c)	Referenced in 2007a, 2008b, 2009j.	Develops within a FCAS framework.	Recognises the need for a 'joined up' approach.	Acknowledgement of need for improved governance, accountability and state responsiveness. Institutional questions are also engaged.	Repeated reference to state–societal relations and statebuilding processes; recognition of need for sustained contextual engagement.	Emphasises the importance of 'capable, accountable and responsive' states (CAR). Engages each of the constitutive elements.
<i>White Paper: Making Global Governance Work for the Poor: Building State Capability</i> (2006)	Referenced in 2007a, 2007b, 2007c, 2008b, 2009e, 2009g, 2009j, 2010, 2010b.	Engages within a developmental framework. Primarily directed towards poverty alleviation.	Largely focused on poverty reduction and governance-related issues. Very limited engagement with FCAS.	Chapters Two, Three and Five engage core aspects of governance.	Limited engagement with state–societal relations or with social/contextual themes.	No sustained engagement with democratisation or securitisation.
<i>Local Ownership of Security Sector Reform</i> . Paper prepared for DFID by L. Nathan. (2006b)		Security sector reform is conceived in general terms, not with specific reference to FCAS).	Adopts a broad conception of security sector reform that engages with aspects of governance and local-level engagement.	Engages aspects of domestic governance, alignment of democracy and security ('democratic security'), civil society engagement, local ownership.	'Local ownership' conceived with reference to a variety of engagements at the local level. Contextual adjustment and partnerships addressed.	Highlights ways in which security reforms become interlinked with broader questions of governance. Demonstrates the various ways in which the elements become interlinked.
<i>Fighting Poverty to Build a Safer World: A Strategy for Security and Development</i> (2005)	Referenced in 2006, 2007b.	Clearly directed towards questions and themes of conflict.	Acknowledges need for approach across government departments. Report focuses primarily on specific interrelation of security and development.	Briefly engages links between poor governance and insecurity. Briefly stresses need for inclusive practices of governance.	No sustained discussion of local-level engagement.	Primarily discusses links between security and development. Briefly engages with other interactions and interrelations.



**Table B: Core British Government Comprehensive Approach Texts, 1997–2016, continued**

Document (DfID Unless Otherwise Stated)	Importance to Other Policy Texts	Relevance to Peacebuilding	Claim to Comprehensiveness	Extent of Engagement		
				Deepening	Contextuality	Complementarity
<i>Why We Need to Work More Effectively in Fragile States</i> (2005b)	Referenced in 2005, 2005c, 2007b.	Conceived within a developmental framework. ‘State fragility’ is not synonymous with ‘conflict affected’.	Importance of co-operation between government departments emphasised. Reference made to the integration of security, diplomacy and development.	Emphasises importance of institutional reform, centrality of political factors, inclusive governance, relationship between poor governance, poverty and insecurity, civil society engagement.	Importance of contextual factors emphasised. Relationship between formal and informal processes also engaged.	Relationship between poverty and political instability is referenced and developed. Insecurity conceived with reference to weaknesses of governance.
<i>Partnerships for Poverty Reduction: Rethinking Conditionality, DfID, FCO and Treasury</i> (2005c)	Referenced in 2005, 2010b.	Predominantly discusses the provision of foreign aid.	Primarily addressed to a single aspect of the comprehensive approach.	Civil society and private sector engagement, addressing improved accountability/ transparency measures, poverty reduction strategies, participatory forms of engagement.	Develops principles of ‘ownership’ and ‘partnership’ with reference to engagement at the domestic level.	N/A
<i>Investing in Prevention, Prime Minister’s Strategy Unit</i> (2005d)		Directed towards themes of conflict. Post-conflict peacebuilding conceived as an important part of a preventive strategy.	Report refers to a ‘coherent package of development, political and security engagement’. Reference is also made to ‘systemic and coherent engagement across different kinds of actors’.	Civil society engagement discussed and elaborated. Institutional reform is engaged. Inclusive political settlements referenced.	Reference is made to ‘partnerships for stability’. Capacity building and alignment with local actors is also engaged. Importance of context is referenced and acknowledged, as is importance of local ownership.	Different constitutive elements are referenced, engaged and developed. Particular emphasis on stabilisation.



**Table B: Core British Government Comprehensive Approach Texts, 1997–2016, continued**

Document (DfID Unless Otherwise Stated)	Importance to Other Policy Texts	Relevance to Peacebuilding	Claim to Comprehensiveness	Extent of Engagement		
				Deepening	Contextuality	Complementarity
<i>Fragile States: Defining Difficult Environments for Poverty Reduction</i> (2004)	Referenced in 2005b.	Works within a FCAS framework.	Primarily focused on relationship between politics and development.	Engagement with political institutions. Reference is made to a 'dominant set of policy assumptions', 'Good governance focused on poverty alleviation, inclusive governance, improved state capacities and capabilities.	Emphasis on partnerships with local actors, relations between formal and informal processes. Reference is made to a 'context-specific political analysis' and 'country-led development. State–societal relations are addressed.	No sustained engagement with themes of securitisation.
<i>The Security Sector Reform Strategy, Evaluation Report</i> (2004b)		Conceived with reference to general developmental practices and interventions.	A 'joint MoD, FCO and DfID' strategy is invoked. 'Security' is conceived in broad terms.	Engages themes of institutional reform and accountability/ transparency, integration of SSR into poverty reduction strategies.	Brief engagement with capacity-building initiatives at local level.	Discusses interrelation of security sector reform, democratisation and development. Discussion is general.
<i>Understanding and Supporting Security Sector Reform</i> (2004d)	Referenced in 2006b.	Focuses on DfID's assistance to institutions concerned with provision of security.	Reference made to the need for a 'joined-up' approach that operates across different departments. Need for 'policy coherence' also acknowledged.	Discusses governance arrangements, civil society engagement, transparency/ accountability, governance agenda. Engagement with PRSP, institutional reform, public engagement with SSR.	Stresses the importance of local partnerships and capacity-building. Little engagement with informal institutions or social/ cultural institutions.	Touches on relationship between security provision and democratisation and development. Reference is made to role of DfID, FCO and MoD.

**Table B: Core British Government Comprehensive Approach Texts, 1997–2016, continued**

Document (DfID Unless Otherwise Stated)	Importance to Other Policy Texts	Relevance to Peacebuilding	Claim to Comprehensiveness	Extent of Engagement		
				Deepening	Contextuality	Complementarity
<i>Better Government for Poverty Reduction: More Effective Partnerships for Change. Consultation document.</i> (2003)	Referenced in 2004.	Engages within a developmental framework.	Focuses on a specific aspect of the comprehensive approach: the relationship between democratisation and developmentalism.	Explicitly stresses need to go beyond formal institutions to engage broader societal, economic and political factors; need for civil society engagement; improved governmental practices; democratisation. Engagement with poverty reduction agenda. Reference is made to ‘effective democracy’.	Stresses the importance of engagement with local context, enabling processes. State–societal relations are referenced. Calls for a closer engagement with the individual specificity of each context. Reference to the need to make context the starting point.	No sustained engagement with themes of securitisation.
<i>Review of the UK Government Approach to Peacebuilding and Synthesis of Lessons Learned from UK Government Funded Peacebuilding Projects, 1997–2001</i> (2003b)		Engages within a peacebuilding framework.	Outlines an approach that engages across three government departments.	Engages with poverty reduction strategies, decentralisation, civil society engagement. Engagement with local realities and dynamics. Considerable part of report is not relevant to liberality.	Argues for a more sustained engagement with contextual factors and considerations, development of local ownership. Considerable part of report does not engage with spatiality.	Much of the discussion directed towards empirical instances of intervention) is not directed to themes of democratisation, developmentalism and securitisation.
<i>Understanding and Supporting Security Sector Reform</i> (2002)	Referenced in 2007a.	Engages within a security sector reform (SSR) framework.	The importance of cross-departmental cooperation. ‘Joined up’ approach is recognised.	Focuses on relationship between governance and SSR, Security dimensions of poverty reduction strategies referenced. Accountability emphasised. Role of legislature is engaged.	No real engagement with this theme.	Primarily engages with democratisation of the security sector. No real engagement with developmental themes and concerns.

**Table B: Core British Government Comprehensive Approach Texts, 1997–2016, continued**

Document (DfID Unless Otherwise Stated)	Importance to Other Policy Texts	Relevance to Peacebuilding	Claim to Comprehensiveness	Extent of Engagement		
				Deepening	Contextuality	Complementarity
<i>Making Government Work for Poor People: Building State Capacity</i> (2001)	Referenced in 2003b, 2004.	Engages within a developmental framework of refer- ence.	Need for a 'joined up' approach acknowl- edged.	Focuses on civil soci- ety engagement, ac- countability, empow- erment, poverty allevi- ation. Emphasis on quality of government, state responsiveness, formal and informal modes of political par- ticipation, decentrali- sation/ devolution, state capacities/ capa- bilities.	Development inter- ventions should be adapted to individual contexts, local leader- ship/ ownership. Shift away from standard- ised approaches. En- abling environments, transparency/ account- ability.	Each constitutive ele- ments is referenced. Securitisation is en- gaged only to a lim- ited extent.
<i>White Paper: Eliminating World Poverty: Making Globalisation Work for the Poor</i> (2000)	Referenced in 2001, 2003, 2003b, 2005.	Engages within a developmental framework of refer- ence.	Focused on relation- ship between govern- ance, global integration and devel- opment.	Engages core elements of emerging develop- ment paradigm: im- proved governance and pro-poor emphasis within public policy.	N/A	In large part not con- cerned with securitisa- tion or democratisation.
<i>Conflict Reduction and Humanitarian Assistance Policy</i> (1999)	Referenced in 2002, 2003b.	Engages within a peacebuilding framework.	Integrates humanitar- ian assistance into a peacebuilding and development frame- work.	Relates conflict analysis to issues and themes of good gov- ernance, civil society engagement, pro- poor emphasis.	Brief emphasis on local capacity-build- ing, local knowledge and expertise.	Limited discussion of security sector democ- ratisation.
<i>Poverty and the Security Sector: Why Security Matters</i> (1999b)	Referenced in 1997, 2000d, 2002.	Engages within a SSR framework.	References require- ment for respective government depart- ments to work more closely.	Emphasis on pro-poor intervention, civil so- ciety engagement, in- stitutional reform, improved transparency and accountability.	N/A	Asks in general terms how each constitutive element can be inte- grated into a general SSR framework.



**Table B: Core British Government Comprehensive Approach Texts, 1997–2016, continued**

Document (DFID Unless Otherwise Stated)	Importance to Other Policy Texts	Relevance to Peacebuilding	Claim to Comprehensiveness	Extent of Engagement		
				Deepening	Contextuality	Complementarity
<i>White Paper: Eliminating World Poverty: A Challenge for the 21st Century</i> (1997)	Referenced in 1999, 2001, 2003b, 2004d, 2005.	Engages within a developmental framework.	Primarily engages questions related to development and governance. Outlines general approach to development.	Pro-poor development. Focus on poverty alleviation, accountable governance, civil society engagement, poverty alleviation, participatory frameworks, state responsiveness, decentralisation, institutional reforms.	Discussion of partnerships, sustained engagement with context, local-level capacity building, adaptation to local knowledge.	Engages with relationship between poverty alleviation and good governance. Limited engagement with issues of conflict and conflict resolution. A considerable part of the document does not engage relevant issues.
<b>Other Departmental and Cross-departmental Reports</b>						
<i>Analysis for Conflict and Stabilisation Interventions, What Works Paper</i> , Stabilisation Unit (2014)		Engages the analysis of interventions within FCAS.	Importance of analysis that engages across FCO, MoD and DFID. Referenced to as joint analysis of conflict and stability (JACS).	Importance of governance acknowledged. Focus on responsiveness of government institutions/ world governance assessment (WGA), participation, poverty reduction, state capability, civil society engagement, institutional capacity-building, informal analysis.	The need for contextualised analysis and political engagement is recognised, but not expounded on in depth.	Limited engagement with themes of securitisation.

**Table B: Core British Government Comprehensive Approach Texts, 1997–2016, continued**

Document (DfID Unless Otherwise Stated)	Importance to Other Policy Texts	Relevance to Peacebuilding	Claim to Comprehensiveness	Extent of Engagement		
				Deepening	Contextuality	Complementarity
<i>UK Approach to Stabilisation</i> , Stabilisation Unit (2014b)	Referenced in 2014, 2014d.	Engages within a FCAS framework.	An integrated, cross-government is explicitly invoked.	The interaction of formal and informal institutions is recognized, including elections, legitimacy of social/ political systems, political Settlements, elite authority, inclusive governance.	Creation of space for local actors, contextual engagement, adaptation to context. Local-level stabilisation emphasised. Build local capacity and ownership, state-societal relations.	Outlines an understanding of security that incorporates aspects of good governance, legitimacy and inclusive political settlements.
<i>Security Sector Stabilisation</i> , Stabilisation Unit (2014c)	Referenced in 2014, 2014d.	Engages within a FCAS framework.	Reference is made to a 'holistic political-security' approach. Invokes 'joint analysis of conflict and stability' (JACS).	Reference to the 'political and governance aspects of stabilisation'. Creation of political 'space for dialogue', governance stabilisation. Emphasis on 'indigenous structures and processes', relation of formal and informal institutions, shift beyond state-centric engagements, improved accountability, opening of political space, political settlements, more representative institutions, improved decision-making capacities.	Reference to local ownership and capacities, heightened accountability, local capacity building. Emphasis on stabilisation through local actors, state-societal relations, relationship between internal and external actors, local institutional capacities. Emphasis on understanding conflict context, role of host government.	Relates good governance and legitimacy to security. References need to achieve 'politico-security understanding', 'capable, accountable and responsive states'.

**Table B: Core British Government Comprehensive Approach Texts, 1997–2016, continued**

Document (DfID Unless Otherwise Stated)	Importance to Other Policy Texts	Relevance to Peacebuilding	Claim to Comprehensiveness	Extent of Engagement		
				Deepening	Contextuality	Complementarity
<i>Planning for Conflict and Stabilisation Interventions</i> (2014d)	Referenced in 2014.	Explicitly directed towards themes of conflict/ post-conflict intervention.	Reference to an integrated or comprehensive approach to planning that works across departments.	Establishment of legitimate political authority, local ownership, political settlement, governance, institution building, inclusive political settlement.	The need for contextual engagement is recognised.	Emphasis on integrated military and civilian approaches and analyses, integration of political, civilian and military instruments, joint analysis of conflict and stability.
<i>Conflict Pool Strategic Guidance</i> , FCO, DfID, MoD (2013)		Focuses on a cross-departmental funding mechanism.	Conflict pools relate to the work of FCO, DfID and MoD.	Inclusive political systems, civil society engagement, transparency, accountability.	Emphasises local capacities and contributions, context-determined objectives. Emphasis on centrality of context.	Limited engagement with each of the constitutive elements.
<i>Building Stability Overseas Strategy</i> , FCO, DfID, MoD (2011)	Referenced in 2012, 2013, 2014, 2014b, 2014d.	Explicitly addressed to FCAS.	Highlights importance of an 'integrated, cross-governmental strategy' and whole-of-government approach.	Emphasises importance of strong and legitimate institutions. References interaction between formal and informal institutions, effective institutions, including inclusive, participatory and responsive governance systems, political settlements, accountability, civil society engagement.	Local ownership, state-societal relations, need for sustained engagement with context, forms of political engagement that go beyond the state, development of capacities within local communities, local participation, emergence of 'prevention partnerships'; Rejection of one-size-fits-all approaches. Engages state-societal relations.	Not engaged or discussed in extensive depth.



**Table B: Core British Government Comprehensive Approach Texts, 1997–2016, continued**

Document (DFID Unless Otherwise Stated)	Importance to Other Policy Texts	Relevance to Peacebuilding	Claim to Comprehensiveness	Extent of Engagement		
				Deepening	Contextuality	Complementarity
<i>A Strong Britain in an Age of Uncertainty</i> , Cabinet Office (2010)	Referenced in 2010, 2013, 2014.	Engages generally with British defence policy.	The importance of a whole-of-government approach is recognised.	N/A	Limited emphasis on contextual engagement. Majority of discussion is not directly relevant.	No sustained engagement with relevant themes. Majority of discussion is not directly relevant.
<i>Strategic Defence and Security Review</i> (2010c)	Referenced in 2010, 2013, 2014.	Considerable part of discussion engages general defence-related issues.	Explicitly outlines an approach that integrates and coordinates across government.	N/A	N/A	Brief engagement with work of Stabilisation Unit and interaction between each department in post-conflict contexts.
<i>Responding to Stabilisation Challenges in Hostile and Insecure Environments: Lessons Identified by the UK's Stabilisation Unit</i> (2010d)		References work within FCAS states. Engages the government's work in stabilisation contexts.	Observes that 'the integrated approach is essential'. Discusses the comprehensive approach in extensive detail.	Community engagement, governance, domestic political settlement, accountability, capacity-building, empowerment, devolution, heightened accountability, legitimacy and responsiveness, empowerment, civil society engagement.	Recognises the need for approaches that build on 'local culture, context and the operating environment', need to support local solutions. Acknowledgement of non-state forms, state-societal relations, adjustment of 'lesson learning' and conflict analysis to individual context, cultural engagement, community engagement, local-level stabilisation.	Emphasises accountable security services, relationship between participation and security, general relation of governance to security.

**Table B: Core British Government Comprehensive Approach Texts, 1997–2016, continued**

Document (DFID Unless Otherwise Stated)	Importance to Other Policy Texts	Relevance to Peacebuilding	Claim to Comprehensiveness	Extent of Engagement		
				Deepening	Contextuality	Complementarity
<i>Planning for Stabilisation: Structures and Processes</i> , Stabilisation Unit (2009)		Emphasises that integrated approach encompasses different department.	Focuses on interaction between cross-Whitehall teams.	N/A	N/A	Emphasis on capable, accountable and responsive (CAR) state.
<i>Security and Stabilisation: The Military Contribution</i> , MoD (2009b)		Discusses engagement with FCAS.	Explicitly references a comprehensive approach, integrated 'security, governance and development' efforts.	Emphasises governance structures and institutionalisation. Engagement with 'root' causes, political settlements/ elite engagement, institutional performance, localised service provision, responsiveness, legitimacy of local government, promotion of participation in government, institution building, civil society engagement, capacity building, inclusionary governance.	Stresses societal conflicts, local legitimacy, state-societal relations. Emphasises role of host government, cultural sensitivity. Stabilisation model conceived with reference to local engagement, host nation ownership.	Engages civilian-military relations. Engages counter-insurgency-political battle space'. Links governance into human security. Outlines stabilisation model based on interrelation of insecurity, underdevelopment and weak governance.
<i>Security Sector Reform Strategy</i> <i>Global Conflict Prevention Pool</i> , (2004-2005)	Referenced in 2006b.	Outlines broad-ranging conception of security. Not specifically directed to post-conflict intervention.	Engages across all three government departments.	Emphasis on accountability of security actors, institutional reforms, accountability, transparency, parliamentary oversight of security services, poverty reduction.	Capacity-building, assistance to partner governments.	Democratisation of security services, relationship between security and legitimacy/development, civil-military relations, holistic approach to SSR.



**Table B: Core British Government Comprehensive Approach Texts, 1997–2016, continued**

Document (DfID Unless Otherwise Stated)	Importance to Other Policy Texts	Relevance to Peacebuilding	Claim to Comprehensiveness	Extent of Engagement	
				Deepening	Contextuality
<i>Investing in Prevention: An International Strategy to Manage Risks of Instability and Improve Crisis Response</i> , Prime Minister's Strategy Unit (2005)	Referenced in 2011, 2012.	Engages with themes of conflict prevention.	Systematic and coherent engagement across a range of governmental actors. Emphasises a holistic approach.	Discusses political institution-building, internal capacity-building, civil society, state failure, engagement of internal actors, good governance, engagement of domestic elites, links between poverty and conflict, internal capacity, social contract, participation, legitimacy, elite engagement, inclusive political systems, configuration of political system, accountability, empowerment.	Discusses partnerships for stability, state-societal relations, non-state institutions, societal conflicts. Sustained engagement with context, locally-owned solutions, partnerships for stability, heightened understanding and analysis of context, role of external assistance.
					Very limited and tangential engagement with this theme.

Coloured cells indicate the document addresses the topic in useful ways.

## Chapter Four

### Deepening and Democratic Participation

#### Introduction

Critical engagements with the democratisation literature have highlighted conceptual and theoretical limitations (Labonte 2003; Chopra and Hohe 2004; Richmond 2005), forcefully making the case for a substantive democratisation. For some observers, the shift towards a more substantive framework should be conceived as a progression beyond more 'circumscribed' frameworks (Labonte 2003, 262; Barnett et al 2007; Berdal 2009). Chopra and Hohe similarly set out the case for an overhauling of exclusionary social structures (2004, 289); Newman calls for an approach that 'aspir[es] to cosmopolitan aspirations and a positive peace' while Oliver Richmond rejects the abstracted, depersonalised and rationalised liberal peace and proposes that democratic engagement should be rooted within the 'everyday' (2011, 13).

In addition to these normatively loaded conceptions of democratic engagement, there is a functional counterpart which conceives of popular mobilisation as a means through which heightened efficiency and improved operational outcomes can be sought. Popular engagement, for instance, can be justified upon the basis that it provides elites with improved access to information, resulting in heightened levels of accountability and responsiveness in the process.

While this model of democratic engagement has an intuitive appeal to policy makers fixated upon a wider statebuilding agenda, it is vulnerable to the criticism that it offers a very limited account of political mobilisation and engagement. Carothers has therefore, with vaguely pejorative overtones, previously referenced a democracy 'template' (1999, 86) which has, until recently, held international policy makers in its thrall. In adhering too closely to its stipulations, policy makers have been exposed to the accusation that they have been too top-down in their approach, paying insufficient regard to local context and its influence upon peacebuilding interventions.

In seeking to transgress beyond the 'narrow' parameters, liberal peacebuilders have made extensive use of peacebuilding theory, finding in it a resource that provides liberal peacebuilding with a renewed impetus and

momentum. The contribution of authors such as Burton, Galtung and Lederach, which substantially predates the practice of post-conflict peacebuilding, enables the articulation of a transformative agenda directed towards the underlying causes of violent conflict.

As one illustration of how the terms of debate might be progressed, Richmond's stress upon the 'everyday' progresses the terms of reference beyond the dry, abstracted and arcane vernacular of democratic theory. Richmond therefore posits a lived experience that is part and parcel of the 'everyday'. In reiterating the centrality of an engagement that goes beyond the state, Chandler observes that the 'problematic of how states can be strengthened through accessing and influencing social or societal processes has therefore become positioned at the heart of the peacebuilding problematic' (2013, 21).

The problematic of social and societal engagement anticipates and sustains a whole new order of democratic engagement. In opposition to its 'narrow' counterparts, this 'deepened' framework of democratic reference is considerably less suited to, and can even be seen as diametrically opposed to, managerial or technocratic counterparts. In rooting practice within local perspectives and capacities, and in evidencing a close attention to the ends, as opposed to the process, of democratic practice, this deepened framework does not anticipate a heightened systemic functionality or efficiency, but rather the fundamental transformation of the 'root' causes of political violence (Fetherstone 2007, 202-203; Keating and Knight 2004, xxxiv).

This preoccupation with 'root' causes can be traced back to the influence of peacebuilding theory. In the introductory chapter, I noted that peacebuilding theory, along with technocracy and liberal ideology, appeared as one of the three sources that feed into liberal peacebuilding. From a different perspective, the emphasis upon a 'deepened' form of democratic engagement could also be justified as an instance of lesson learning – that is, as an adjustment to, and transition away from, top-down managerial or technocratic distortions (Bellamy 2004; Gawerc 2006; Ahmed 2007).

In this chapter I will engage with the question of how this 'deepened' framework has been assimilated into British policy documents, serving as the embodiment of a progression within the terms of democratic reference.

This chapter does not examine whether the British government has actually managed to achieve or manifest this shift; instead, it proposes to identify precisely how this shift has been textually reproduced. My essential concern is to identify precisely how, to borrow a Foucauldian term, the concept of democracy is ‘made to function’ within core peacebuilding documents. I do not propose to engage this question at a general level of analysis; rather, I will break the general proposition into three specific points of engagement: governance, empowerment and local knowledge.

‘Governance’ is, it might be tentatively observed, a word that is as frequently invoked as it is undefined. In its contemporary usage, it appears to suggest a framework of reference that is no longer grounded within the state. It opens up space for the inclusion of a wider range of social actors, clearly heralding a shift away from hierarchical or bureaucratised structures (in this respect, government can be clearly contrasted with governance).

It also brings in economic and social processes, thereby providing an added degree of complexity. Governance can also be conceptualised as an adjustment to rapidly altering social and economic circumstances. The work of Joseph (2012), to take one example, brings out the neo-liberal dimensions of the concept, clearly illustrating how it has been closely tied up with the development of subtle and indirect styles of economic management and oversight. Governance corresponds to a new governing rationality, which does not seek to directly control or coerce; on the contrary, it instead seeks to inaugurate more efficient and effective forms of social and economic management.

In his engagement with the concept of empowerment, Kenneth Bush suggests that it essentially corresponds to the creation of domestic ‘space’. He therefore suggests that the word is co-terminus with the absencing of external influence and the prioritisation of local agency (1996, xxxvi). Empowerment, in keeping with the accounts that were discussed in the Literature Review chapter, is therefore closely linked into the accentuation of local contributions and the deliberate and conscious attenuation of external inputs (DfID 1997, 37; 2009, 3; OECD 1997b).

It will be recalled that this representation of empowerment is almost diametrically opposed to the interpretation that Barbara Cruikshank offers in the

Foucault chapter. Empowerment, she reflects, is characterised by the democratically unaccountable exercise of power and relations that are both coercive and voluntary. In this respect, her contribution closely corresponds to Richmond's invocation of technologies that are 'of both emancipatory and repressive' character (2010, 200). In reminding us that empowerment can assume repressive dimensions, Richmond notes that it, when articulated within a neo-liberal vernacular, functions as a means through which local actors are incorporated into wider structures of oversight. This serves to again reiterate that, under conditions of neo-liberal governance, freedom (of which empowerment is but one dimension) serves as the conduit through which power is embodied and reproduced.

Closer attention reveals that the lack of predetermination is an important corollary of empowerment. By virtue of its deep conceptual and theoretical debt to peacebuilding theory, liberal peacebuilding is more predisposed to an open-ended form of empowerment. The absencing of external influence is not merely an aspiration to be achieved but is actually a defining attribute. A closer engagement with the peacebuilding literature reveals that this emphasis can be traced back to two points: in the first instance, it is a normative commitment which has been reinforced by the more general 'local turn' (Richmond, 2013); in the second, it is a belated acknowledgement of the constraints that the post-conflict context imposes upon external actors (DfID 2009, 3).

Empowerment is discursively and practically linked to local knowledge, which has become an increasingly important resource within peacebuilding interventions. Both points of emphasis produce the same conclusion – external actors should acknowledge and engage the local at all points, resisting the temptation to impose their own perspectives and insights. Both local knowledge and empowerment are thereby established as limiting points.

However, it is somewhat difficult to reconcile this representation with the accounts of exteriority that we have previously encountered. In these contributions, there was a clear sense that liberal peacebuilding was guided by external knowledge and priorities, and that it was ultimately predisposed towards the reproduction of externally derived frameworks and templates. For other critical observers, liberal peacebuilding is a governmental technique that subtly reconfigures the domestic context. For these observers, it is deeply

problematic, and indeed counter-intuitive, to recast a disciplinary or regulatory instrument as a means of emancipation and social transformation. From this perspective, local knowledge would be constituted within the interaction between the international and local, serving to further perpetuate and entrench established relations. In opposition to the liberal claim that local knowledge qualifies excesses of external influence, it would instead be the case that this local knowledge would be a by-product of this same influence.

In this chapter I seek to narrow in on governance, empowerment and local knowledge. I seek to demonstrate that a closer engagement with the purported progression brings out a whole host of concealed tensions and contradictions, suggesting a referent object that is considerably more complex, convoluted and ambiguous than the initial terms of engagement suggested. Technocratic and managerial points are not surpassed, but are instead reconfigured, often in highly complex and convoluted ways. The wider neo-liberal context frequently asserts itself, infringing upon the agency of the domestic subject.

### **Governance, Development and Democratic Politics: DfID's Work in Developing More Effective States**

The first dimension of deepening, governance, is developed with reference to *Governance, Development and Democratic Politics: DfID's Work In Building More Effective States* (2006); the second dimension, empowerment, is developed with reference to *Building the State and Securing the Peace* (2009); the third, local knowledge, is explored through a closer engagement with *Building Stability Overseas* (2011). A single text provides the basis of my engagement with each dimension, although internally cited texts may provide an additional point of reference. To take one example, themes explored in *Governance, Development and Democratic Politics* may be developed with reference to *Making Governance Work for the Poor* (2006) or *Preventing Violent Conflict* (2007).

*Governance, Development and Democratic Politics: DFID's Work in Building More Effective States* (henceforth *Governance, Development and Democratic Politics*) was published in 2006, in the aftermath of the Gleneagles G8 summit, whose concluding statement had set out an ambitious target for the

reduction of global poverty and the advancement of development aims and objectives. The booklet was intended as a contribution to a larger debate about the political dimensions of development, something which was reflected in its focus upon capable, accountable and responsive (CAR) states and its development of a range of sophisticated analytical tools (such as Drivers of Change and Country Governance Analysis).

At the national level, the document followed on from issues and themes that had been elaborated in the 2006 White Paper. Within the context of the DfID's work, the document arose in response to the clear need to articulate the concept of governance. This was a particularly important undertaking because it was the prelude to an approach which could engage with the political dimensions of development and underdevelopment.

The booklet is organised into seven chapters. These chapters provide working definitions of governance, link governance into poverty alleviation agenda and demonstrate how the concept of governance can be practically applied. Although *Governance, Development and Democratic Politics* does not explicitly reference post-conflict intervention, it has a number of important implications for DfID's conflict engagement activities in general, and therefore for post-conflict peacebuilding.

The booklet begins by rooting governance within social relations; authority is not exerted over society; rather, it is produced within it. This point is made clear when the booklet observes that 'governance is about power and authority and how a country manages its affairs' (2). The emphasis upon 'country' is significant because it reiterates that governance is a collective endeavour rather than the possession of a single institutional authority.

In incorporating a wider array of social actors, governance gives rise to 'complex' or 'networked' political arrangements which can be directly contrasted with static and hierarchical state bureaucracies. This provides the basis for a different form of politics, a point which *Governance, Development and Democratic Politics* explicitly makes when it observes that 'democracy is about much more than having a vote'. In both procedural (inclusive political processes that engage different sectors of society) and substantive (the agenda to which political mobilisation is directed) terms, this democratic framework can be directly contrasted with formal models.

Its fundamental meaning is subsequently made clear when the document asserts that governance is concerned with ‘people and their relationship with the state’ (2, 6). This establishes a clear overlap with the literature on state-societal relations, establishing the basis for a discussion of how accountability and responsiveness can be enhanced through societal mobilisation. In defining governance as a relationship between state and society, the document comprehensively breaks with the concept of state autonomy, the core principle underpinning the Weberian state. In its place, *Governance, Development and Democratic Politics* instead inserts the principle of reciprocity, establishing the mutual interaction between state and society as the basis for a more inclusive and efficient form of politics.

Given that this model of state-societal interaction is so clearly indebted to the literature on social structuralism, we might presume that governance is an essentially political relationship which is clearly distanced from technocratic themes and points of reference. However, a closer reading of *Governance, Development and Democratic Politics* suggests an interlinking of political (‘people and their relationship with the state’) and technical (‘growth, service delivery and the environment’ (49)) preoccupations. In the first instance, attention is directed towards themes of civil society engagement, institutional reform along with principles of accountability, participation and transparency); in the second, it is more preoccupied with the functional by-products of governance.

In the introduction to this chapter I observed that governance suggests an agenda and range of practical innovations that go beyond the state. A closer engagement with *Governance, Development and Democratic Politics* suggests that this general characterisation is somewhat misplaced – on numerous occasions, the discussion flickers back to the broad agenda of state performance, along with associated imperatives of sustained economic growth and improved service provision (49). This range of preoccupations is explicitly invoked when the booklet notes that the ‘state is in an ‘unrivalled position to transform economies and societies’ (11). It is particularly significant that all three sections of the good governance framework – state capability, accountability, responsiveness – relate to the actions (or inactions) of the state (37). Further reiteration of these preoccupations is provided when the booklet



fixates upon executive-legislative relations and the design and implementation of state policy (20), along with the importance of elected representatives, open and fair elections, responsive and accountable institutions, freedom of association and inclusive forms of citizenship (19) (DfID 2006b, 18).

There is the appearance of elasticity, with the terms of reference initially expanding beyond a given point, only to suddenly and disconcertingly revert back to it. Over the course of this chapter I will illustrate that this feature, far from being an isolated occurrence, is actually a deeply rooted attribute of the governance debate. The persistence of the motif of state performance is particularly striking in this respect, evidencing an ongoing fascination with the conditions under which optimal state performance can be enshrined. Poverty Reduction Strategies (PRS) and good governance frameworks are particularly instructive examples in this respect (41).

Within *Governance, Development and Democratic Politics* this feature is sometimes occluded or understated. A clear example is provided by the document's discussion of formal and informal institutions. The document initially focuses upon the potential contribution of informal institutions, insisting that 'governance is about more than government systems and capacities' (6). In this instance, governance is co-terminus with an expansive realm which is defined in terms of what it is not. In this respect, 'informal' serves the same purpose as 'social' – it suggests a novel sphere of political engagement that is logically distinct from the state. In the following contextuality chapter I will focus upon the concept of the 'social' to a much greater extent, illustrating how it actively militates against the imposition of one-size-fits-all models and frameworks.

*Governance, Development and Democratic Politics* similarly makes this point (37, 69), while reiterating that 'countries need to create their own institutions through locally driven processes' (9). By implication, external actors should begin by recognising the specificity of each context, appreciating the extent to which this limits their ability to engineer change (this is a clear illustration of how the deepening and contextuality agendas overlap and intersect) (3, 7, 13, 20). The imperative of context-specific solutions and the attenuation of external influence further underline and underscore the centrality of local capacities and contributions.

The pre-emptive rejection of one-size-fits-all approaches does not merely place a sanctifying seal upon local agency; to the same extent, it refutes the application of technical models and frameworks. In explicitly clarifying this point, the booklet establishes that: '[DfID's understanding of governance] has gone beyond economic governance and the management of the economy, and beyond analysing and reforming public services and the public sector' (68). The impression is of a progression beyond these 'narrow' reference points and a steady advancement towards a more holistic agenda.

This broad representation is complicated somewhat by a clear reversion towards a set of functional effects, which pertain to 'growth, service delivery and the environment' (49). This impression is further compounded when the booklet observes that 'it is this wider political economy of institutions that determines state effectiveness' (6). Social mobilisation is therefore to be understood in relational terms – that is, in relation to its implications for formal structures and processes. This impression is further reinforced when reference is made to the ways in which 'informal systems influence and shape public policymaking and service delivery' (68).

Initially the terms of discourse had expanded to encompass the familiar concerns of the social structural literature – variation, heterogeneity and contextual specificity were again reiterated and elevated for our attention. However, the terms of reference subsequently enfolded back in upon the equally familiar agenda of capable, accountable and responsive (CAR) states (11). Far from implying an absencing of external influence, participation within this framework ultimately reproduces wider structures of governance while reinforcing a range of functional effects. This is made quite apparent when the booklet asserts that '[direct] participation by poor people in government decision-making processes can improve local accountability, leading, in turn, to more efficient public services' (57). Participation is not intelligible in its specificity, but instead corresponds to a general outline or appearance.

In keeping with the proposition of 'complex' or 'networked' forms of governance, civil society engagement is ascribed a particular importance by *Governance, Development and Democratic Politics*. This booklet explicitly recognises the role that civil society can play in 'negotiating the balance of power between citizens and the state [and] building state accountability and

responsiveness' (62). In clarifying this theme, it reiterates that 'accountability is at the heart of how change happens' (2006, 23, 25, 26).

At this point the significance of the shift to accountability should be acknowledged. It has taken us some distance from the initial terms of reference, in which emancipation and social transformation appeared as the overriding preoccupations. This feature is explicitly reiterated when it is asserted that: 'excluded people must be empowered to make demands of government and hold it to account' (34). Here it will be noted that empowerment is not conceived in open-ended terms but is instead recoded and accorded a very specific function. Accordingly, it is envisaged that local actors will project 'voice', with a view to positively influencing governance practices (32, 33, 34, 68).

*Governance, Development and Democratic Politics* therefore discursively links civil society mobilisation into the state's governing practices, establishing this as the basis upon which 'appropriate' interactions (15) and improved levels of state performance can be entrenched. Participatory 'inputs' enhance state capability, accountability and responsiveness (14, 29), adding further impetus to an established agenda. *Governance, Development and Democratic Politics* is quite explicit on this point: ultimately it envisages a set of circumstances in which participation organises and influences state policy and practice (19).

This chapter began by drawing attention to the nebulous and elliptical character of governance. In contrast, *Governance, Development and Democratic Politics* orientates towards precise and exact stipulations. This convergence upon a precise reform agenda is clearly reiterated when it is stated that 'the state can play a key role in enabling poor people to participate in and benefit from economic growth' (36).

Accountability, efficiency and responsiveness appear as the core preoccupation (14, 38, 39, 49), which enshrine and uphold a 'logic of appropriateness'. It is particularly telling, for instance, that *Governance, Development and Democratic Politics* justifies decentralisation upon the basis that it will bring decision-making closer to citizens, thus inculcating a heightened state responsiveness (57). However, the document treats the state with a certain ambivalence. In the first instance, it appears as the means through which empowerment is enabled; in the second, it is instead an object of suspicion, a potential site of deviation in need of surveillance and oversight.

Civil society is conscripted as a mechanism through which these outcomes can be enabled, diverging considerably from its initial role as an incubator of organic and autonomous agency. *Governance, Development and Democratic Politics* is strikingly candid on this point, conceiving of local participation as a form of 'bottom-up' discipline which will 'mobilise civil society against corruption' (30).

In advancing their interests at the level of the state, social actors will work to ensure that it is responsive to the 'needs and rights of citizens' (14). Again, it is reiterated that local agency disciplines the autonomy of the state, inculcating 'appropriate' forms of conduct from below (also see *Making Governance Work for the Poor* 2006, 66). As a consequence, the state is hemmed in, being subtly orientated towards the insight that its essential concern is 'to get things done through effective policies' (15). Even the precise definition of efficiency is not left open, with the booklet endeavouring to remind us that one of the state's 'essential roles' is to establish conditions conducive to economic growth (37).

In reflecting upon this close imitation of established imperatives, we would surely be forgiven for observing that it possesses little of the spontaneity or originality that we might otherwise attribute to a deepened form of democratic engagement. Quite the contrary, this is a stale repetition of imperatives that have become inextricably interwoven into the wider neo-liberal reform agenda. Although local agency is the ostensible point of reference, it is only intelligible in its relation to an encompassing background.

The tenor of neo-liberal reform may be understated or occluded, but it is continually there. At certain points, it is asserted with a disconcerting and abrasive immediacy. *Governance, Development and Democratic Politics* illustrates this when it reverts to a strikingly impersonal, removed and almost mechanical vernacular, contending that governance analysis is concerned with 'all the mechanisms, processes, relationships and institutions through which citizens and groups articulate their interests and exercise their rights and obligations' (6, 15). This surreptitious insertion of 'interests', 'rights' and 'obligations' again takes us some distance from the emancipatory or transformative vernacular of peacebuilding theory.

When conceived in this framework, civil society engagement, empowerment and participation are brought into alignment with neo-liberal

reference points, being predisposed towards the reproduction of a range of functional effects. Politics is functionalised, being made to function and correspondingly being rendered as a condition of effective implementation.

Transparency, accountability and responsiveness (70) are the guiding imperatives of this rationalised politics, with previously open-ended concepts closing in upon a precise reform agenda. In registering the perpetual reassertion of efficiency, functionality, responsiveness and accountability, the reader is confronted by a certain circularity of discourse

This feature is further reiterated when *Governance, Development and Democratic Politics* announces its intention to 'ground technical solutions in the governance and political environment in which they operate' (39). The adjustment of technical frameworks to context represents an important innovation, replacing the more frequently voiced proposition that the limitations of technocratic approaches have been acknowledged and integrated into peacebuilding strategies. The 'technical' and 'political' are no longer situated in diametric opposition but are instead intertwined within a range of complex formulations. In place of an inexorable progression, it would perhaps be more appropriate to propose a set of subtle pivots or manoeuvres.

The incorporation of the local context into wider neo-liberal governance has important implications for the level of heterogeneity and contextual variation that can be envisaged. When *Governance, Development and Democratic Politics* asserts that there is 'no single best path' (37) it does not, in contrast to the social structuralism literature, anticipate limitless variation but instead envisages variation *within* the parameters that have been established by neo-liberal governance. Although the terms of reference tantalisingly hinted at the broad expanse that lies beyond state functionality, there is a deeply rooted recidivism, a predisposition to revert back to this agenda. The social is undoubtedly engaged, but the terms under which it is assimilated into the neo-liberal reform agenda are considerably more convoluted than the initial depiction of deepening allowed or envisaged.

## **Building the State and Securing the Peace**

*Building the State and Security the Peace* (henceforth *Building the State*) was an important contribution to an internal debate within DfID that could be

traced back to 2004/2005. In engaging with the theme of state fragility, it engaged the convergence of the statebuilding and peacebuilding agendas, reflecting and reiterating an understanding that development objectives could only be achieved through a sustained engagement with the drivers of conflict. DfID sought to situate this security-development nexus within a wider process of institutional learning, suggesting that its heightened awareness on this point had been driven by the insight that many of the states in which it was operating were confronted by twin challenges of underdevelopment and insecurity

The document provided an acknowledgement that, in working towards the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals, development actors needed to integrate a heightened conflict-sensitivity into their work, adapting to drivers of conflict in the process. This represented an important innovation, overcoming the temptation (which had previously been deeply entrenched within the development field) to ‘work around’ conflict. *Building the State and Securing the Peace* (henceforth *Building the State*) is therefore part of a wider recognition that ‘building peaceful states and societies needs to be central to donor responses in conflict-affected and fragile states’ (3).

*Building the State* was written as an emerging policy paper and was published in 2009. It represented a contribution to an ongoing discussion (which subsequently resulted in a policy paper) about how the statebuilding and peacebuilding agendas could be brought together. It breaks down into four sections: the first two sections engage political settlements, responsive statebuilding and the relationship between statebuilding and peacebuilding; the third section outlines the specific attributes of statebuilding frameworks before progressing to the more general attempt to develop an integrated approach to conflict engagement and intervention. The document highlights potential points of integration and associated contradictions and tensions. A final section extracts operational implications from DfID’s previous engagements with fragility and conflict.

In engaging at a general level of analysis, the document develops DfID’s strategic framework for engagement with conflict and fragility (it should however be recognised that engagements under the Fragile and Conflict Affected States (FCAS) framework are not restricted to the post-conflict intervention phase).

The text situates conflict engagement within a broader framework of reference by invoking both the *Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness* (2005) and the *OECD-DAC Principles for Good International Engagement in Fragile States and Situations* (2007). It roots itself within an endogenous approach and commits itself to draw upon internal capacities (3, 4). In addressing itself to the challenges of the conflict environment, it commits itself to engage within a political framework of reference (4).

*Building the State* demonstrates how capable, accountable and responsive (CAR) states can be constructed through a more sustained conceptual and practical engagement with both state–societal relations and informal political processes; it privileges both reference points because they root analysis and practical intervention firmly within the host society. Political settlements at the domestic level, the establishment of responsive state structures and the alignment of internal and external processes and relations.

*Building the State* engages with the broader theme of empowerment at three points. Empowerment is closely associated with three key points of reference. The first is *social* processes and structures. In the terms initially set out in this chapter's introduction, 'social' implies a different order of democratic engagement and an alterity within the terms of political reference. Secondly, it is concerned with the point at which the statebuilding and peacebuilding agendas interface. While the statebuilding literature has become increasingly sensitive to heterogeneity and variation, there is still a residual suspicion that statebuilding's underlying impulse is to universalise, rationalise or standardise. In direct contrast, peacebuilding has been, since its inception, associated with the cultivation of endogenous capacities and processes.

Finally, I will engage empowerment at the point where technical and political rationalities collide. This necessitates a closer critical deconstruction of how expertise, generally applicable bodies of knowledge, are integrated and 'reconciled' with the various dimensions of the deepening agenda. In the context of the current engagement, these present particularly important points of engagement because the dimension of democratic deepening is premised on the move away from, or attenuation of, managerial and technocratic terms of reference.

In a comparable manner to my other textual engagements, my discussion of *Building the State and Securing the Peace* will also engage internally cited texts. I will therefore also reference a DfID White Paper (*Making Global Governance Work for the Poor*), a policy paper (*States in Development: Understanding Statebuilding*) and a briefing note published by DfID in 2010 (*Aligning With Local Priorities*).

In engaging with the concept of positive peace, *Building the State* begins by enlarging one of its core tenets, namely, the proposition that a genuine peace requires a more sustained engagement with societal reference points. This concern is further reiterated when it is observed that a closer engagement with ‘complex social and political processes’ (3) anticipates a more sustainable ‘social peace’ (9). ‘Social peace’, in these terms, is understood to rest upon an approach that engages forms of violence that are rooted within social processes and interactions.

This suggests a ‘deep-rooted’ engagement that goes beyond the limitations of appearance and which penetrates deep into societal content. A ‘limited’ engagement will, by implication, only serve to reproduce pre-existent forms of violence in subsequent effect. The proposition of a ‘social peace’ clearly recalls the work of Johan Galtung, whose work had previously engaged with structural forms of violence that are deeply embedded and rooted. This distinction established a clear basis for his distinction of ‘negative’ (in which the symptoms of violence are mitigated or removed) and ‘positive’ (in which the structural roots of violence are comprehensively addressed) forms of peace.

Because social peace emerges within and through society, it cannot be conceived as an external imposition; presumably, this can be taken to imply that its exact meaning will vary across or between societies. However, the concept of ‘positive peace’ that is reproduced within *Building the State*, in common with the version that is produced within *Governance, Development and Democratic Politics*, appears to be considerably more enclosed and predetermined. This is apparent when the document adapts an OECD definition to observe that ‘positive peace’ is characterised by: ‘social peace, respect for the rule of law and human rights, and social and economic development, supported by dynamic and representative political institutions capable of managing change and resolving disputes without resorting to violent conflict’ (9).



This quotation essentially integrates the proposition of a deeper, social peace with an agenda that is focused upon a more formal framework of reference, a feature that is reiterated by the allusion to ‘representative political institutions’. It is as if the agenda of ‘positive’ or ‘social’ peace has been refracted through a lens and reconstituted as a vision of good governance. Accordingly, informal institutions are therefore engaged and understood with reference to the ‘relationship between state and society’ (2). Social actors are also, in a manner which clearly recalls *Governance, Development and Democratic Politics*, to be empowered in relation to a specific object – that is, in relation to the state.

The concept of the ‘social’ is not self-referential or conceived in isolation; rather, it is situated in relation to a very precise set of expectations and related to an equally exact set of outputs. The ‘informal’ or ‘social’ are, in this manner, incorporated into, and aligned with, governance networks. This feature recalls the Foucault chapter, which previously demonstrated how various aspects of freedom (a condition embodied within various forms of ‘empowerment’ and ‘participation’) become embedded within broader governmental imperatives. Freedom, it is again reiterated, does not therefore function as the point at which power is denied or resisted, but rather as the means through which it is embodied and circulated.

The concept of civil society engagement plays an important role within the democratic vision of liberal peacebuilding, and the regularity with which the concept is invoked within policy documents testifies to its perceived political significance. The ambiguity of the concept derives, in part, from the fact that it relates to the unspecified space between the state and citizen. In direct contrast to the formal political process, it cannot be exactly defined as ‘political’ but instead appears to be more ‘social’ in character. Empowerment within and through this framework of reference is not therefore defined in the vernacular of political theory, but is more frequently defined in relation to socio-economic needs and requirements.

This feature is clearly reproduced within the framework of ‘social’ agency that is reproduced within *Building the State*. Social agents engage through civil society or informal institutions – a term which the document references on thirty-three occasions. Empowerment through this mechanism imposes a set of

restraints and inhibitions upon state autonomy; accordingly, the domestic state becomes inculcated in an 'appropriate' conduct and is therefore less prone to the vices which have frequently tempted developing states – corruption, inefficient public administration, arbitrary and 'excessive' state intervention in the domestic economy.

'Empowered' social actors do not seek to realise or embody political ideals or concepts. The legitimisation of the state through its interactions with society is not strictly political, but is instead grounded within a set of functional expectations. *Building the State* makes this quite clear when it anticipates a happy eventuality in which 'the political settlement expands beyond elites to reflect a broader compact between the state and society, based on delivery and accountability' (8). The basis of political authority therefore does not originate within a political ideal or rationality, but rather within its ability to respond to expectations and provide efficient forms of service provision.

This presents us with a strikingly depoliticised version of empowerment, which has as much in common with rational choice frameworks as it has in common with theories of participatory democracy. In engaging politically, social actors ultimately seek to embed an optimised state functionality, which will embody and further their personal socio-economic interests. *Building the State* presents us with an almost apolitical form. This is disconcerting because we might intuitively assume empowerment is an essentially political term, which is essentially concerned with the process and circumstances under which political agents fundamentally alter their political conditions of existence.

The document reproduces the understanding which was initially advanced by the OECD; namely, that 'civil society has a key role in demanding good governance and in service delivery' (2). Empowerment, when situated in this manner, becomes a mechanism through which 'appropriate' and 'proportionate' practices are reproduced. The democratic engagement of social or informal actors, far from functioning as a site of alterity, spontaneity or variation, ultimately reproduces a set of functional effects.

Far from functioning as a means through which a range of unilateral demands are advanced, empowerment instead appears as a 'compact' (11) which incorporates domestic actors into the distinctive prerogatives and practices of neo-liberal governance. Within this framework of reference,

‘democracy’ becomes reformulated as ‘an institutionalised mechanism for expressing expectations, protecting rights, and holding government to account for its delivery and actions’ (6). Here it is again important to note that empowerment has been redefined in relational terms, that is, in relation to the state and its provision of essential services. This relational attribute is similarly reproduced within the assertion that ‘democratic institutions and processes can help to rebuild state legitimacy’ (6). It is similarly significant that the ostensibly political concern of democratic engagement has become redefined in anticipation of a range of policy outputs (15, 26).

Empowerment does not therefore function as a means through which established power relations are challenged and reconfigured. *Building the State* reconfigures civil society (which it references twenty times) and demonstrates how it provides improved ‘monitoring, facilitation and service delivery’ functions (14). This echoes *Making Global Governance Work for the Poor* (2006), a previous DfID White Paper, which had presented local-level empowerment as a means through which heightened levels of transparency and elite accountability could be achieved. (6). In both instances, empowerment ultimately works towards the reproduction of a set of generalised or standardised effects.

In *Building the State* we therefore encounter concepts of ‘empowerment’, the ‘social’ and the ‘informal’ as features or attributes of the statebuilding agenda. The understandings that we might intuitively attribute to each of these reference points – ‘empowerment’ as the alteration of power relations; ‘the social’ as a site of specificity; the ‘informal’ as the diametric opposite of the ‘formal’ – are subtly altered and reconfigured. As a consequence, each of the three reference points becomes intelligible in their relation to the overarching statebuilding theme. Herein lies the significance of the assertion that ‘informal systems of governance have a profound impact on statebuilding and peacebuilding dynamics’ (22). Far from being a single feature of the statebuilding agenda, this instead provides the overarching rationale of the entire enterprise, and *Building the State* explicitly underlines this point when it observes that ‘in all contexts, statebuilding is principally about strengthening the relationship between state and society’ (4).

As I observed in my discussion of *Governance, Development and Democratic Politics*, this specific feature (the functional outputs that derive from

a specific configuration of state–societal relations) can be traced back to the general framework of neo-liberal governance. The document’s preoccupation with accountability and transparency, both of which are essentially presented as derivatives of social agency, further underscores and reiterates this feature. Whereas we might intuitively be predisposed to associate ‘empowerment’ with direct engagement and participation, in *Building the State* it is instead recapitulated as a form of indirect influence, that is, as a mechanism through which accountability (which is referenced twenty-four times in *Building the State*) and appropriate forms of state conduct can be inculcated.

A closer engagement with the ‘how’ of empowerment reiterates that it is constructed within and through neo-liberal governance, and conceived in relation to the range of imperatives and outputs that correspond to this point of reference. In engaging with the ways in which empowerment is reproduced, I have attempted to demonstrate that the essential question is not whether peacebuilding actors engage with ‘empowerment’ or ‘participation’, but rather, how both reference points, which I have presented as inherently supple and adaptable, are reconfigured, recomposed and aligned with broader imperatives and frameworks.

This distinctive framing of empowerment can also be engaged at the points where peacebuilding and statebuilding discourse come into contact. In the Introduction and Literature Review I defined peacebuilding as a set of interventions which are directed towards the underlying causes of violent conflict. Although statebuilding interventions can conceivably assume an equally wide range of forms, they are ultimately directed towards a more precise objective – that is, the consolidation of state authority within a given territory. While I distinguish between the two frameworks on this basis, it is also important to acknowledge that statebuilding (and this is a point that I make in the Literature Review chapter) can be understood as an aspect or dimension of peacebuilding.

As illustrated in the Introductory chapter, peacebuilding theory logically implies a ‘deepened’ or more substantive understanding of democratic engagement. By virtue of a prior structural analysis of power and violence and a prior emancipatory or transformative commitment, peacebuilders are predisposed to engage at the ‘roots’ of society. *Building the State* further

unravels this prior commitment and anticipates a more sustained engagement with: a) inclusive peace processes and settlements, b) mechanisms that resolve conflict peacefully and c) interventions that are simultaneously addressed to the causes and effects of violent conflict.

In engaging at the 'nexus between statebuilding and peacebuilding' (3) and in developing and applying an 'integrated approach', *Building the State* attempts to demonstrate how peacebuilding techniques and practices can be integrated into 'long-term efforts to build state capacity and legitimacy' (15). This establishes the conceptual, theoretical and practical basis for a 'broadened' statebuilding agenda (13). Although this framework stretches across a wide range of reference points, it is ultimately predisposed to return to formal points of reference. *Building the State* reiterates this point when it asserts that 'there is no substitute for the state in managing serious risks of violence' (3). The prospects of alternative political arrangements are briefly considered (in the form of shadow alignment), but it is made clear that this exception will only emerge as an active consideration under very limited circumstances.

This raises the question of who is to be the subject of empowerment. In the previous account, the subject was a range of social actors who were to be empowered in relation to the state. However, the assertion that there is 'no substitute for the state' instead, in contrast to the underpinning logic of peacebuilding (which is instead premised upon a more sustained social engagement with 'social' actors and processes) there is instead the proposition of a closer alignment with partner country 'policies, strategies and priorities' (1). This suggests a reversion to the formalised preoccupations of statebuilding literature, which are the 'parliaments, the judiciary, the media, civil society, political parties and human rights bodies, as well as elections and the electoral cycle' (24)) associated with the formal political process.

This also suggests a subtle alteration within the terms of empowerment. Whereas empowerment had previously been grounded within society, it is now instead grounded within the state, and conceived of with reference to the question of how its capacities can be constructed and enhanced. The agency of social actors is not conceived as in opposition to formal structures and processes, but is thought of as constituted within and through it. Ultimately social actors orientate towards the formal political process and seek inclusion

within it. Thus, 'maintaining stability will depend on the political settlement, an accommodation between all groups that have a stake in the way that power is shared, and the state having a representative function' (18).

The peacebuilding agenda, in this manner, is subtly adapted and refracted through the statebuilding lens. And civil society empowerment becomes a mechanism through which improved levels of transparency and accountability can be achieved and reproduced within governance practices (13, 15, 21). The empowerment of local actors produces a range of positive feedbacks and impacts (5) which impact upon the broader policy process (6) and enhance the performance capabilities of formal institutions.

One of the most frequently repeated axioms of statebuilding literature is that it is an inherently political process, which cannot be sufficiently conceived and conceptualised in technocratic terms. *Responding to Stabilisation Challenges* therefore reproduces something of a widely accepted orthodoxy when it asserts that 'there is no such thing as an apolitical engagement in a conflict environment' (Stabilisation Unit 2010, 1). This understanding is also reproduced within the assertion that: 'stabilisation activities do not readily lend themselves to linear planning, or to conventional monitoring and evaluation based upon a straightforward causal logic between inputs, outputs and anticipated outcomes' (2010, 13).

In working within this framework of reference, the Stabilisation Unit has previously asserted that the development of 'the best political approach is more important than delivering technical assistance' (2010, 25). The insufficiency of a technical rationality is again reiterated and reaffirmed. Ultimately, stabilisation actors should not direct their attention to the reproduction of an exact template but should adjust to the contingencies and complexities of context. *Responding to Stabilisation Challenges* reiterates this point when it asserts the importance of a 'contextual understanding [of] the history, socio-economics and political economy of a country or region' (2010; 11). A contextual understanding will not be predisposed to reproduce prior templates and frameworks, but will instead approach the domestic context from within an open-ended framework of reference. This is the core implication, which derives from, and which sustains, Whaites's abrupt rejection of 'development dogma' (2008, 6).

*Building the State* asserts the centrality of a local-level engagement when it states that peacebuilding and statebuilding are ‘primarily internal processes within countries’ and that ‘donors do not ‘do’ either process. This again presents a simultaneous assertion of internal agency and limitation of external influence as essential conditions of democratic engagement. This does not imply an absenting of external influence, but rather its reconfiguration within a primarily facilitative or supportive role (2010, 3). However, this does not result in the absenting of external influence; rather, it instead becomes recast within a supportive or facilitative role (3).

From this perspective, the purpose of external assistance is to ‘enable’, ‘assist’ or ‘empower’ local actors. The purpose of external engagement is not to predetermine, but rather to help to establish the conditions under which local agents are enabled to bring about effective change. Upon a closer reading, the reader does observe a tendency to switch between two propositions of empowerment: the first in which local agency emerges in the absence of external intervention, and the second in which local agency is produced within and through various forms of external mediation.

In the second instance, there is frequently a certain understatement, in which the respective contributions of internal and external actors are not made clearly apparent; for instance, it is quite frequently only through various forms of external assistance – administrative support, staff secondment and training – that internal agency is enabled. Further, it is possible to find instances in which the respective contributions of internal and external actors are clouded or occluded. This feature is evidenced when *Building the State* presents Community Driven Development Programmes (the use of the word ‘community’ being understood to imply a high degree of local ownership) as a means through which local actors can *influence*, that is, indirectly influence, the ‘identification, design, management and monitoring of local interventions’ (9).

However, it is also possible to identify other instances in which external influence is conversely afforded a precise significance. *Aligning with Local Priorities* (the title itself denotes a prior exteriority) observes that local agency is not self-sustaining, but that it is only enabled and perpetuated through various forms of external influence (DfID 2010b, 9). In further expanding this theme, the document observes that the ‘quality of the participatory processes that are put

in place and their sensitivity to local context are therefore crucial and often need support from external facilitators' (ibid).

The use of the word 'quality' is significant because it highlights how domestic processes are reconstituted and assessed against external benchmarks and standards. It also suggests that these processes are to be assessed in relation to a prior set of criteria and expectations. Equally significantly, they are not self-sustaining, but are instead only enabled and sustained through various forms of external intervention and engagement. This provides one clear illustration of how 'local' agency is – contra its idealised representation – immersed within various forms of external influence. The proposition of an 'alignment with local priorities' is therefore far from an isolated instance or occurrence, rather, it reveals something quite fundamental about internal-external relations within statebuilding frameworks.

Whaites, in rejecting 'development dogma', similarly appeals to this sense of local agency. His stress upon autonomous agency interjects a clear sense of contingency into his analysis, and by implication, this makes it difficult to sustain the proposition that general frameworks and templates should be transferred across different societies. A contextual analysis rooted within social specificity is poorly adjusted to a technocratic mentality, which is premised upon transferability, standardisation and predictability. From this perspective, the transfer and application of generic lessons is contextually constrained. As Whaites observes, a 'political' analysis which is rooted within the specificity of each individual context is therefore synonymous with a sense of heterogeneity and variation (2008, 5). If complexity, contingency and context are taken to be determining, this imposes clear limitations and constraints of generalisation that can be envisaged and enacted. Context, from this perspective, is a limiting factor which constrains generalisation or universalisation.

Whereas 'political' interactions are essentially 'messy, implicit and nonlinear', their technical counterparts are instead predictable and linear. In pointing out how stabilisation interventions are impacted by political considerations, *Responding to Stabilisation Challenges* suggests that a technocratic framework should not be superimposed upon stabilisation practices. Far from establishing the basis upon which stabilisation could be understood and analysed, this framework of reference instead distorts and



disfigures. In establishing political factors as the core concern and basis of analysis, the document simultaneously underscores the analytical limitations that derive from a technocratic framework of reference.

Alan Whaites provides a different perspective when, with reference to political settlements, he distinguishes between technical ('the process through which states enhance their ability to function') and political ('the forging of a common understanding, usually among elites, that their interests or beliefs are served by a particular way of organising political power') dimensions of statebuilding (2008, 4). In openly acknowledging and reiterating the technical dimensions of his object of reference, Whaites clearly diverges from a number of previous contributions, which had been more predisposed to understate or even occlude technocratic implications. In *Building the State* it is also possible to identify instances in which referent objects are engaged and conceived at the level of generality, as with the statebuilding CAR (capability, accountability and responsiveness) framework of reference. After stripping away superfluous detail, *Building the State* clearly identifies a number of 'core' functions that are common to all ideal-type states. In further elaborating these 'core' attributes, the document, in a discussion which frequently qualifies universalising assumptions, outlines a model of the state which is founded upon general attributes – the establishment of the rule of law, the provision of security and non-discriminatory service provision (7).

## **Building Stability Overseas Strategy**

The *Building Stability Overseas Strategy* (henceforth *Building Stability Overseas*) was a joint publication of the MoD, FCO and DfID which was published in 2011. Although the broad theme of state fragility follows on from *Building the State*, it is more explicit in highlighting the promotion of national interests as its core priority. The document was written at a time when the so-called 'Arab Spring' was in its infancy. At this point in time the overthrow of authoritarian leaders was still viewed with optimism, as an opportunity to promote and inculcate more open, accountable and responsive systems of governance. The 'Arab Spring' offered the opportunity to break with the legacy of previous interventions within the Arab World, not least the disastrous 2003 invasion of Iraq.

The development of this strategic framework should also be understood against the background of the British interventions in Afghanistan and Iraq. In acknowledging the limitations of past post-conflict interventions, it signals a clear movement towards forms of ‘upstream’ engagement that seek to prevent the outbreak of violent conflict in the first instance. This raised clear questions about the precise role of peacebuilding (which significantly is only referenced five times within the strategy) within international approaches and strategies. Stability interventions no longer sought to undertake effective intervention in the aftermath of violent conflict; rather, they instead sought to put in place the monitoring and oversight mechanisms that would enable integrated conflict management systems to function more effectively. In wider institutional perspective, the document could therefore be said to reproduce a profound and significant shift from ‘post’ to ‘preventative’ engagement.

In engaging at a general strategic level of analysis the strategy incorporated the respective contributions of each of the three departments and sought to demonstrate how their collective efforts could contribute to a stabilisation of conflict situations. Although stabilisation is a broad-ranging framework of reference, the discussion ultimately orientates back towards themes of security, which is why the document references both the National Security Strategy and the Strategic Security and Defence Review. *Building Stability Overseas* makes it clear that ‘diplomatic, development, military and security tools’ (4) will be perceived through a security lens and that an ‘integrated’ or ‘whole-of-government’ approach to security will provide the basis of discussion.

Because *Building Stability Overseas Strategy* does not internally reference other documents, I have returned to the table of policy documents in the Engaging the Comprehensive Approach Chapter and extracted three documents, each of which has previously been published by the UK’s Stabilisation Unit, a civil-military operational unit that brings together the work of DfID, the FCO and the MoD. The first document, *Responding to Stabilisation Challenges in Hostile and Insecure Environments: Lessons Identified by the UK’s Stabilisation Unit*, develops within a ‘lesson-learning’ framework. It therefore asserts that ‘[relevant government departments] need to identify relevant lessons from past experience, learn from these, and adapt them to the

specific requirements of each new environment' (27) and seeks to operationalise a 'best practice' of stabilisation. The other two documents were published by the Stabilisation Unit in 2014, and set out a general stabilisation framework (the UK Government's Approach to Stabilisation), and engaged with a specific attribute of stabilisation (Security Sector Stabilisation).

In each of these documents, we encounter a number of reference points that we have previously engaged. To take one example, empowerment closely overlaps with capacity-building. Both relate to the question of how local actors can, through the development of specific abilities and skill-sets, address themselves to immediate challenges. Equally significantly, policy texts frequently depict capacity-building as a set of largely neutral interventions which are, in the last analysis, ultimately directed towards the absencing of external mediation and oversight. Finally, both frameworks of reference are also grounded within a knowledge that establishes and enshrines an 'appropriate' set of practices. A more sustained engagement with local actors therefore appears as a means through which a more complete integration of knowledge and practice can be attained. Knowledge production provides a mechanism that enables stabilisation actors to 'feed lessons back into policy, planning and practice' (2010, 27). Information from specific instances is then in turn fed back into more general strategic frameworks (Stabilisation Unit 2010, 2; 2014, 2, 3).

The *Building Stability Overseas Strategy*, in direct contrast to *Governance, Development and Democratic Politics*, is predisposed to approach key questions and themes from an external perspective – that is, with reference to the challenges and obstacles that are associated with the development of an external strategy. This point is explicitly underlined by the fact that *Building Stability Overseas* does not primarily understand 'capacity-building with reference to local actors, but instead predominantly focuses upon the actions of the British government (thus, it is stated that the stabilisation unit draws 'upon expertise from across government, the police and the military' (19). The purpose of 'lesson learning', it is made clear, is to establish the basis for improved forms of co-operation and interaction between different government departments.

By virtue of its emphasis upon expertise, stabilisation can be perceived, to some extent, as a technical exercise that involves the development,

application and integration of a body of knowledge. However, it is characterised by clear political features and attributes. By virtue of the fact that it cannot be reduced to either political or technical dimensions, stabilisation can therefore be said to be a dichotomous form. In further reiterating this point, *Security Sector Stabilisation* refers to both political and technical reference points (2014, 10). However, this does not necessarily mean that the two are of equivalent importance; quite the contrary, the document's allusion to the 'primacy of the political process' (2014, 12) establishes a clear hierarchical order of importance. *Building Stability Overseas* also furthers this impression when it proposes a fundamental break with technocratic assumptions and modes of engagement (16).

From the outset, it is clear that the document is ultimately concerned with the development of a general knowledge, that is, an identification of a knowledge which can be applied across and over different contexts. In its initial phases, the document engages with the question of how optimal working relationships can be established between a range of institutional actors. This, then, is an essentially logistical knowledge, which is directed towards the effective arrangement, ordering and deployment of policy resources. This focuses the imperative of lesson learning, which could conceivably take any number of government activities as its reference point, upon inter-departmental relations and interactions. The question of how this appropriate ordering can be achieved is a principally bureaucratic or technical concern, and this is reflected within the terms of engagement. This generalising predisposition can be directly contrasted with the proposition of a distinctively local knowledge which, as a prior condition, is deeply rooted within the specificity of each individual context. The *UK Approach to Stabilisation* acknowledges this latter form of knowledge when it references the need to 'analys[e] and respon[d] to changes in the political context' (2014b, 2).

In this section of the chapter I will take the interplay between the two forms of knowledge as my key point of reference. I will specifically ask how they are interrelated, intertwined and integrated. *Building Stability Overseas* engages with this question at two points. First, it asks how general 'lessons' can be integrated into general stabilisation strategies. In engaging with the proposition

of generally applicable 'lessons', it conceives of frameworks and templates which can be applied *across* different contexts.

In the Introductory chapter I engaged with a knowledge that seeks to establish the basis for a generally applicable practice of conflict intervention – what Fukuyama has termed as a 'transferable knowledge'. *Building Stability Overseas* directs our attention to this project when it references 'conceptual foundations for engagement in fragile states' and a prior 'knowledge base' (34). This is a form of knowledge which exists outside of, and prior to, engagement with the individual context. It presupposes a framework of reference that can be adapted and applied as a general practice. This form of knowledge can be clearly contrasted with local knowledge. Whereas transferable knowledge is inherently practical, local knowledge instead derives from an initial claim to be 'organic', 'authentic' or rooted within the practices and culture of the individual society.

*Building Stability Overseas* breaks down into two parts: the first part addresses the ways in which 'lessons' have been integrated into the stabilising strategy; in engaging at this point, it references lessons that have 'been learned' and directs the reader's attention to 'a growing body of international evidence of what works' (4). The second part of the document is concerned with the question of how violent conflict should be practically engaged (22). Whereas the initial part of the document is concerned with abstract reference points, the second part is more concerned with securitising practices. The elements are interdependent. *Building Stability Overseas* works towards a practice which is rooted within an improved analysis of conflict (22, 24). Practice feeds into analysis, just as analysis feeds into practice.

*Building Stability Overseas* initially considers the links between intra-state conflict and international security. It observes that the indirect threats that derive from state collapse are an increasingly important concern for the field of security studies. In emphasising the fact that security threats no longer present themselves in an objective form, *Security Sector Stabilisation* has previously emphasised the need for a 'politico-security understanding' (2014, 12). In seeking to ground its practice within this form of knowledge, *Building Stability Overseas* seeks to establish the basis for an integrated framework of knowledge and practice. A 'politico-security understanding' therefore originates

and sustains a range of innovative practices. In initially establishing the foundation of this understanding, it suggests an analysis of the ‘drivers’ of conflict – these are the various factors which underpin and sustain violent conflict (10). As the discussion within the introductory chapter established in more detail, this concern with underpinning or underlying causes is intimately associated with the proposition of a broadened analysis of security.

A ‘politico-security understanding’ suggests an approach which is able to engage at and across the various political dimensions of insecurity. In outlining this approach, *Building Stability Overseas* emphasises the importance of good governance frameworks. This in turn leads the document to stress the potential contribution of legitimate institutions, free markets and open and responsive systems of economic and political management. In engaging at each of these points, *Building Stability Overseas* demonstrates how various capacity-building initiatives can contribute to heightened levels of prevention and resilience. Prevention is enabled and sustained by a country strategy that ‘identifies short, medium and longer-term measures for stabilisation and prevention’ (24), and this ties in to a broader agenda that is concerned with the development of preventative capacities; resilience, in contrast, is presented as a responsive capacity – that is, as the ability to adjust, in a post hoc manner, to sudden or unexpected shocks (5). Both aspects – prevention and responsive capacity – appear as part of an integrated strategy that is directed towards the sequential phases of the conflict cycle.

Institutions have a crucial contribution to make to the development and enhancement of this responsive capacity. Legitimate institutions enable stabilisation actors to adjust, in a flexible and adjustable way, to sudden shocks (2, 5). The importance of this theme is attested to by the fact that *Building Stability Overseas* references institutions thirty-three times. It is equally important to note that it is the objective characteristics of these institutions – their inclusivity, legitimacy and adaptability – which enables them to adjust to these challenges and ‘manag[e] tensions and shocks’ (2, 5).

Although these institutions are understood to be grounded within the local context, they are reproduced through and within a general set of expectations: the agenda which surrounds capable, adaptive and responsive (CAR) institutions is a clear reference point in this respect. Although the

discussion is focused upon the importance and potential contribution of 'local' institutions, these reference points are recapitulated and reconfigured as a set of general expectations. The overarching theme of state functionality or capacity is a generally applicable – and therefore externalised – framework of reference which is essentially superimposed upon the individual context (the Literature Review chapter made a very similar observation with regard to the concept of 'state failure').

The agenda of institutional capacity and functionality appears, to this extent, as an external framework of reference, which relates to, and which derives from, a set of generally applicable and standardised expectations. This feature is evidenced, for instance, when the discussion turns to the question of responsiveness (the importance of this agenda is reiterated by the fact that the document references accountability on twenty-four occasions and civil society engagement on twenty occasions). Here there is a clear impression that the establishment of certain relations will in turn produce and reinforce a range of functional effects; these, in turn, establish the basis for a clear template of reform.

Upon reading *Building Stability Overseas*, the reader's attention is continually brought back to a level of generality, that is, to a set of abstracted propositions which are divorced from the context to which they will be applied. The reader therefore repeatedly encounters stabilisation as a generalising knowledge, which can be adapted and applied across a range of different contexts. However, the feature of functionality frequently comes up against a more contextual knowledge and practice. Upon a closer reading, this can make the document appear internally contradictory – as if it is attempting to bring together two mutually opposed positions or, to put it slightly differently, 'reconcile irreconcilables'.

*Responding to Stabilisation Challenges in Hostile and Insecure Environments* (2010) situates analysis within a generally applicable framework of reference when it refers to a 'growing field of understanding' (Stabilisation Unit 2010, 3). This 'growing field' will be sustained by the 'development of systems to feed lessons back into policy, planning and practice' (2010, 27). Knowledge and practice will be integrated in a way that reinforces and reproduces generally applicable policy frameworks. The detached vantage point

of policy actors will in turn enable them to extract, adapt and apply 'stark lessons' (Stabilisation Unit 2014, 3).

This feature is evidenced, for instance, when the broad agenda of capacity and functionality comes up against the axiom which holds that external actors should resist the temptation to impose their own designs and templates (11). Clearly, it could be objected that this is precisely what frameworks premised upon 'functionality' and 'capacity' seek to do. The propositions that 'context is everything' (34) and the associated commitment to 'situation-specific interventions' (24) present a similar impediment to the reconciliation of the text's internal contradictions. A discourse of functionality and capacity repeatedly comes up against a discourse of context and specificity. The interaction between the two presents us with a continually reiterated tension or contradiction.

*Building Stability Overseas* is, however, in comparison to other policy documents that have been engaged over the course of this document, more predisposed to explicitly acknowledge the importance and significance of external expertise (2). This represents something of a departure precisely because these documents had instead been more predisposed to understate, mitigate and even occlude externalised reference points. This feature is reproduced, for instance, within the proposition that capacity-building is an endogenous undertaking, which is driven and sustained by local actors. However even here, the exact contribution or significance of this external expertise is far from clear or transparent. To this extent, the stated commitment to 'strengthen and develop effective conflict management and peacebuilding capacities within communities, countries and regions' (26) does little to clarify in detail how external expertise will be integrated and reproduced through local political conditions.

This is far from an isolated or singular occurrence. Within both the peacebuilding and stabilisation literature, we repeatedly encounter instances in which concepts such as 'capacity-building', 'empowerment' and 'partnership' are framed or presented in ways that are ambiguous or open to interpretation. These concepts do not present themselves in their immediacy, but only as the consequence of a more sustained reading which disentangles the nuances and subtleties of the conceptual reference point. This disentangling consciously and



deliberately situates its object of engagement within a broader set of relations and interactions. As one illustration, while capacity-building takes the agency of local actors as its point of engagement, it is invariably reproduced through, and sustained by, a wider field of knowledge and expertise.

In my reading of *Building Stability Overseas* I encountered a perpetual oscillation between two forms of knowledge –a knowledge that applies across different contexts and a knowledge that applies within specific contexts. Upon a closer engagement with the text, the reader encounters something of a tension between the proposition that ‘context is everything’ and the range of universalising and rationalising reference points that are built into stabilisation texts. A critical reading does not therefore render a smooth and linear progression towards a ‘deepened’ democratic agency; rather, it presents an ongoing tension between the local and the external, the technical and the political and the general and specific.

## Conclusion

In the initial stages of this chapter, I briefly summarised the central grounding assumptions of democratic deepening, and examined how it is closely intertwined with a form of democratic engagement which is more than a process; democratic deepening, in the terms that I established, is intimately tied into the proposition of a substantive framework of democratic reference. It is not only concerned with the democratic legitimacy of specific processes and procedures, but also the ends to which this democratic process is directed. I proposed to ask over the course of the chapter how this deepened form of democratic engagement is reproduced within a range of peacebuilding and stabilisation texts. In engaging with this question, I sought to explore the proposition of a democratic deepening at three separate points: governance, empowerment and the integration of local knowledge.

*Governance, Development and Democratic Politics* begins by outlining a ‘political’ analysis of governance which is rooted with social processes and structures and which is directed towards informal reference points. In engaging at these points the document initially establishes an impression of a clear graduation beyond managerialism or technocracy. In defining its own terms of engagement in direct opposition to technical reference points, *Governance*,

*Development and Democratic Politics* furthers the impression that the technical and political are diametric opposites.

However, this broad representation clearly contrasts with my analysis of governance. In my own reading, the document evidenced a tendency to reproduce technocratic, functionalist and managerial reference points. Rather than progressing in a unidirectional manner beyond technical and managerial reference points, the document more frequently (and most obviously with reference to the imperative of capable, accountable and responsive (CAR) states) evidenced a tendency to revert to these points. Under the aegis of neo-liberal rationality, the document evidenced a tendency to regress to a functionalist discourse.

Far from denying or negating democratic agency, the discourse of functionality expands to incorporate it into its own framework of reference. This is illustrated by the way in which *Building the State* engages and adapts the concept of empowerment. Just as *Governance, Development and Democratic Politics* is directed towards social reference points, *Building the State* also begins from the assumption that empowerment is rooted within social capacities and capabilities. In referring back to peacebuilding frameworks, it stresses the centrality and political significance of ‘social peace’ (9). Empowerment is not therefore presented as an abstract political concept, but is instead conceived to be rooted within social processes and dynamics. Precisely by virtue of this feature, empowerment will not present itself as a general practice, but will instead vary in accordance with social conditions.

*Building the State* initially establishes empowerment as an open-ended concept, which is not predetermined in any sense. However, a closer reading suggests that the concept of ‘empowerment’ is considerably more hemmed in than these initial terms of reference had suggested. The interjection of a discourse of functionality serves to orientate the terms of discussion back towards a more circumscribed framework of reference; a similar effect was evidenced in my discussion of governance. This feature clearly recalls Richmond’s account of how the concept of ‘ownership’ becomes reformulated when it is conceived within the terms of liberal peace (2012, 356).

My own analysis of empowerment similarly underscores the sense of limitation or constraint which is imposed by a discourse of functionality.

Whereas the idealised form of ‘empowerment’ and ‘social’ presents an open-ended range of possibility, the textual products instead present a more circumscribed or predetermined framework of reference.

Empowerment does not, contra the initial terms of reference, correspond to an absenting of external influence. It instead corresponds to its subtle reformulation and reconfiguration. This is shown by the way that empowerment is not conceived in isolation, but is theorised in its relation to, and implications for, formal institutions. Far from being open-ended, empowerment is instead reconstructed and rendered as a functional input. The principal proposition here, as Richmond has observed in his discussion of ownership, is not the absenting or mitigation of external influence; quite the contrary, it is instead ‘participation and compliance within international regimes’ (2012, 360).

Empowerment, in this understanding, is conceived within a very specific framework and directed towards the reproduction of an equally specific range of outputs. Under conditions of neo-liberal governance, empowerment is not predisposed to challenge or contest, but rather to optimise or enhance. A closer reading of *Building the State* renders an instance in which the ‘social’ no longer appears as a site of difference or alterity; rather, it presents itself as a standardised input which is guided and orientated towards the reproduction of a range of beneficial effects (e.g. heightened levels of transparency and accountability). In acknowledging the ways in which empowerment is reformulated and applied as a technique of government, it would, in direct contrast to the proposition of a spontaneous or self-directing local agency, be more exact and appropriate to speak of a *mobilisation* of local agency.

This mobilised agency is directed towards the reproduction of a number of core neo-liberal tenets – heightened efficiency, responsiveness and functionality. Empowerment comes to function as a form of ‘bottom-up’ discipline which inculcates an ‘appropriate’ conduct of the state (DfID, 2009; 8). In both *Building the State* and *Governance and Development and Democratic Politics*, an emancipatory, participatory and transformative discourse becomes reconfigured as a functional input which impacts upon the statebuilding process (DfID 2010, 3). Empowerment therefore comes to function as a means through which a range of functional outputs – monitoring, facilitation and service provision – are reproduced.

In a similar manner to empowerment, local knowledge also comes to function as a means through which a whole range of externalised imperatives are consolidated and reproduced. Far from surmounting or going beyond formal or technical reference points, stabilisation discourse instead reconfigures and realigns both features into a set of novel and original formulations. The essential proposition is not therefore of a surmounting of formal and technical points of reference; rather, it is one of adaptation, in which democratic agency is 'made to function'. This functional discourse orientates social agents towards the reproduction of a very precise and exact set of governance outputs.

## Chapter Five

### Contextuality and the State

#### Introduction

Contextuality is not an isolated development but can instead be said to be part of a broader paradigm shift, in which statebuilding actors have sought to incorporate increased variation and heterogeneity into their statebuilding strategies. Richmond and MacGinty speak of a 'local turn', which they define as a 'dangerous and wild place where Western rationality, with its diktats of universality and modernisation, is challenged in various ways' (2013, 763; also see Chandler 2013).

In seriously engaging with the proposition of contextual engagement, statebuilding actors should not attempt to impose their own preferences and priorities. The 'local turn' logically implies a more inductive framework of engagement, in which context is articulated in the process of intervention. Whereas deepening was co-terminus with a shift towards a more substantive framework of democratisation, contextuality is synonymous with a shift from the external to the internal.

Just as deepening appears as a response to deeply ingrained tensions and contradictions, contextuality can also be said to be an innovation that has occurred in response to the externalisation of peacebuilding paradigms and interventions. Bickerton, in previously acknowledging the limitations of the previous framework of engagement, disapprovingly observes statebuilding interventions that have 'shallow roots in the societies [in which] they are being built' (2007, 53; also see Chandler 2006; Hameiri 2010). Rubin, in offering a very similar critique, has suggested that 'international actors often try to introduce ready-made solutions from outside, trying to impose a model of a liberal democratic state without regard for the specific social relations and institutional history of a nation or territory' (2005, 104). Exteriority, a point of reference which was examined in detail in the Foucault chapter, is therefore the essential problem to which contextuality is addressed.

In recognising the limitations of how an over-reliance upon external perspectives, resources and inputs has undermined previous interventions, statebuilding actors have increasingly sought to ground their interventions

within local context. Through engaging with local actors, processes and structures, peacebuilding actors will in turn be able to adjust their interventions to the needs and requirements of each individual context. A heightened understanding and acknowledgement of context will, upon the basis of this understanding, result in approaches and frameworks which are aligned with the specificities of individual societies and cultures. Hameiri speaks, in precisely these terms, of replacing 'outside-in' with 'inside-out' frameworks of reference (2010, 5).

Doornbos (2002, 60) relates the required shift in mentality when he relates the need to 'de-generalise'. Despite this, as Berger observes, there is still a persistent assumption that the 'right' set of policies can be implemented without reference to 'the specificity of the local, regional and global context' (2007, 21). Thus, while statebuilding actors broadly recognise the limitations of their conceptual and theoretical framework of reference, there is still a tendency to work within it. In short, statebuilding actors continue to give way to the seductive allure of generally applicable paradigms, theoretical frameworks and practices.

At the same time, a range of institutional actors have come to acknowledge the centrality of social reference points within peacebuilding process. This is part of a broader reorientation. Richmond and MacGinty observe that, '[a]s the first decade of the twenty-first century progressed, the word 'local' became ubiquitous, suggesting that international organisations are aware of the legitimacy and sustainability advantages to be gained by cooperating with local partners' (2013, 771). Previous OECD guidelines on conflict, peace and development co-operation observe that 'a comprehensive and integrated knowledge of the need for state and civil society to work properly together is key to understanding the origins and dynamics of civil conflict' (1997, Point 7). The same organisation further reiterates that the 'strengthening of public institutions must be suited to the political, economic, social, cultural and historical context in which it is undertaken' (1997; Point 179) and stresses that '[t]here is a premium on understanding local contexts' (1997b, 26).

The social, cultural and contextual have therefore emerged as part of a shared agenda which has percolated down to the national level, as embodied by DfID's integration of context analysis into its conflict evaluation frameworks. Contextuality is part of an abrupt shift within statebuilding theory, in which the most pressing or predominant concern is no longer the empirical reproduction of general models, templates and frameworks, but rather the cultivation of specificity and endogenous capacities. Bickerton reiterates that sovereignty should not be understood as an abstract or formal category, observing that 'statebuilding cleaves institution-building from the life of the society in question' (2007, 107). He clarifies that state formation is not the empirical realisation of the grand ambitions of policymakers and technocrats, but instead originates within the internal dynamics of each given society (here it will be noted that Bickerton has, in refracting the state through society, inverted the Weberian model of the state).

Contextuality implies a readjustment which is as much conceptual, or theoretical, as purely practical. This is why Pouligny calls for 'fundamental changes in the intelligence and communication capacities of outsiders, in order that they might better understand local contexts and, more particularly, identify the local actors likely to be the major motors for change' (2005, 505). In practical terms this suggests a sustained engagement with 'deep-rooted socio-economic, cultural, environmental, institutional, political and other structural causes' (UN 2001).

This implies that heterogeneity and variation should, under ideal circumstances, be deeply rooted attributes of statebuilding interventions. If each context is unique, then it is clearly deeply flawed to revert to a universalising or standardising methodology (OECD 1997, Point 39). The agenda of contextual engagement is therefore diametrically opposed to 'a functional and sometimes technocratic view of politics that seeks to "measure" the success of political processes in terms of pre-conceived institutional benchmarks' (Hameiri 2010, 11). Specificity, heterogeneity and variation anticipate a graduation beyond 'one-size-fits-all' or 'blueprint' frameworks (DfID 2000, 13; DfID 2001, foreword; Doornbos 2002; DfID 2010, 23, 29; DfID 2010a, 1; DfID 2010b).

I have already noted that deepening and contextuality overlap at particular points. The 'local turn' is one illustration of this, simultaneously producing a heightened emphasis upon local agency and contextual determinants. For Oliver Richmond, context can be said to imply 'difference and autonomy rather than homogeneity, universalism and dependence' (Richmond 2011, 45). Ethnocentric and cultural biases had previously predisposed liberal peacebuilders to view difference or heterogeneity as deviation from a prescribed framework.

Richmond, in seeking a suitable corrective, insists upon an analysis that disposes with templates and the persistent obsession with making the actual correspond to the ideal. For Richmond, 'deviation' should be understood as 'the renegotiation of the Liberal Peace to reflect key political, economic, social and cultural dynamics in their local context' (2009, 72). Lemay-Hebert makes much the same point, but with reference to a different vernacular. He suggests a 'legitimacy' approach to statebuilding which is grounded within 'local' needs and which is consequently 'more sociologically or anthropologically orientated' (2009, 28).

Contextual engagement begins with an awareness of the essential inadequacy of the Weberian state (see Herbst (1996), Ehrenreich Brooks (2005) and Englebert and Tull (2008)). Milliken and Krause (2002, 762), in expanding this point, have highlighted the contradictions and tensions which result when 'reified' statebuilding models are transferred and imposed upon individual contexts. Far from acting as an ameliorative, this imposition instead originate its own set of contradictions.

Hameiri has previously suggested that, in spite of their best intentions, technocrats invariably fail to engage with the full significance of the 'social'. He observes: 'Technocratic rule does not see its source of legitimacy as coming from the society that it governs but from outside these states in international organisations and foreign governments' (2010, 22). For Hameiri, exteriority is not an unfortunate consequence which can be resolved through suitable innovations within statebuilding approaches; on the contrary, it is instead a deeply rooted, or intrinsic, attribute. David Chandler's *Empire in Denial* further develops this point. He stresses that so-called 'phantom states' are the *logical* culmination of a statebuilding practice that is more accountable to external



donors than to subject populations (2006). Given that there is a 'prevailing tendency to conceive of these operations as technical (or non-ideological) exercises in conflict management' (Paris 2002, 638), it is clearly open to question whether the political or social can be engaged in its full significance.

In this chapter I will suggest that contextuality confronts, but ultimately fails to overcome, this essential tension. In the analysis I present, contextuality originates two imperatives: 1) the conscious and deliberate limitation of external influence, as embodied when *Building the State and Securing the Peace* argues that '[d]onors do not 'do' statebuilding or peacebuilding' (2005, 3); 2) the sustained engagement and incorporation of local specificity. Both points of emphasis serve as a reiteration of variation, heterogeneity and open-endedness (Hameiri 2010, 34).

However, each of these operational imperatives frequently comes up against the limitations that have been imposed by the parameters of liberal peace, and this is why Fritz and Menocal (2007) observe that there are 'major constraints to the articulation of alternatives [to the liberal peace]'. These 'constraints' adhere at the discursive, theoretical and practical level. In the view of Fritz and Menocal, they are the derivative of a 'clear international steer in favour of market-friendly economic reforms [which limits the range of] acceptable economic and social policies state leaders may be able to pursue' (39; also see Chandler 2006).

From our perspective, this raises an immediate question – namely, how does contextuality overcome the various limitations that have been imposed by the parameters of liberal peace? For practitioners of the liberal peace, this question presumably does not arise. Liberal ideology makes it quite clear that liberalism does not seek to impose itself upon its objects of engagement; quite the contrary, the advancement of reason and rationality instead represents the concrete realisation of an inherent potentiality.

Critical contributions to the peacebuilding and statebuilding literature challenge this benign representation by bringing out the disciplinary or regulatory implications of liberal governance. Richmond, for example, has spoken of how contextual engagement has become reconfigured as a 'governmental technology' that enables external actors to exert control from a distance (2011, 28). Far from enabling or empowering an inherent and

previously latent potentiality, liberalism instead presents itself as an artificial imposition from without. Other writers have made a similarly important contribution by drawing attention to the rigidities, inflexibilities and extremities of neo-liberalism (Pouligny 2005, 505; Barkawi and Laffey 1999).

In engaging with the conflicted character of neo-liberal governance, Richmond (2011, 38) and Newman (2009, 47-51) have demonstrated how context can qualify or mitigate external distortions. It will be noted that both problem-solving and critical contributions have addressed themselves to this problematic of context – that is, to the question of how it can be engaged, developed and applied in the course of peacebuilding interventions. Both sets of contributions originate within a prior assumption that the internal and external can be distinguished and diametrically opposed (see Berger 2006, 14). The internal is to be counterpoised to the external, the specific to the general and the domestic to the international.

*Building Peaceful States and Societies* invokes these binary distinctions when it stresses the centrality of *internal* state–societal relations (DfID 2010, 7) and reiterates the essential limitations of external influence (ibid, 11). Edward Newman, in referencing peacebuilding frameworks, implicitly invokes the internal-external divide when he distinguishes between ‘top-down’ (external) and ‘bottom-up’ (internal) approaches (2009, 37). This clear distinction provides the basis upon which external power can be delimited and internal capacities can be accentuated.

This strict demarcation of an internal and external line establishes a dividing line beyond which external actors should not venture. As David Chandler has observed, ‘[t]he politics of the local operates in the informal and societal sphere, out of the reach or vision of Western policy-makers and linear social theorists’ (Chandler 2013, 27). This clearly establishes that external actors should not seek to predetermine, but should instead only assist, enable or supplement (Yannis 2003, 77). This influence is not determining; rather, it instead enables an internal attribute to be more completely expressed. This is the essential rationale which underpins so-called ‘technologies of the self’, such as empowerment, ownership and participation. This is a power which acts at the edges, but which does not venture into the sanctified realm.

Upon the basis of this account, we can therefore infer that the ‘politics of the local’ is co-terminus with defined boundaries and constraints. The internal and the external appear in sanctified isolation, distinguished in binary opposition. This establishes a clear point of engagement for a critical analysis, which should directly address itself to the basis of this distinction. In this respect, Oliver Richmond’s work on hybridity, which seeks to arrive at more nuanced and sophisticated understanding of internal-external relations, is an important reference point. Vivienne Jabri, in offering a succinct summary of this branch of the peacebuilding literature, observes that it is premised upon an explicit rejection of the ‘dichotomous representation of agency’ (2013, 5).

Other contributions to the statebuilding literature bring out this dimension of hybridity in more detail. Hameiri, for example, has previously observed that ‘it is the simultaneously internal-external nature of statebuilding interventions that gives these interventions their unique “multilevel” character’ (2010, 210). Contributions to the social structural and post-colonial literature further clarify that, rather than being in opposition to external influence, ‘context’ is instead actually a dimension of it (Berger 2007; de Guevara 2010; Schlichte and Migdal 2005).

In this chapter I build upon this insight by similarly seeking to ‘blur’ the distinction between the internal and external dimensions of statebuilding. In my view, this ‘blurring’ of the internal-external divide will enable us to question and problematise articles of faith that are deeply rooted within liberal peacebuilding. In examining the nature of internal-external interactions, I intend to show how context is interpolated within practices of liberal governance and forms of government that, to borrow Richmond’s term, operate from a distance (2011, 28). Richmond’s critical appraisal of previous civil society engagements is instructive in this respect. His analysis demonstrates how local or internal actors are brought into the orbit of external governance, with the internal and external becoming intertwined as a consequence.

My analysis is also directed towards the question of how contextuality overcomes the tension between the internal and external. In the self-understanding of liberal peacebuilding, a more sustained engagement with context enables this tension to be engaged and ‘reconciled’. In drawing upon this reserve of optimism, *Building Peaceful States and Societies* observes that

‘there can be tensions between statebuilding and peacebuilding that can be worked through’ (DfID 2010, 18).

I work from the assumption that contextualisation heralds an abrupt break with universalisation and rationalisation. I therefore propose to engage context as an open question, seeking to identify precisely how it is reproduced within core policy texts. I will seek to identify how peacebuilding discourse reconciles three separate tensions. These are the tensions between the internal and external (*Why We Need to Work More Effectively in Fragile States*), the homogeneous and heterogeneous (*Building Peaceful States and Societies*) and the general and specific (*States in Development*). After engaging at each point, I will attempt to evaluate to what extent the texts successfully overcome or ‘reconcile’ each tension.

## **Why We Need to Work More Effectively in Fragile States**

*Why We Need to Work More Effectively in Fragile States* (subsequently *Why We Need to Work More Effectively*) was published by DfID in 2007. It is predominantly concerned with the specific needs and requirements of fragile and conflict-affected states (FCAS) and the development of a conceptual, theoretical and practical framework which will enable external actors to adjust to the condition of state fragility. In engaging with the theme of state fragility it seeks to understand how deteriorations in state capacity negatively impact the general development process. Although it engages within a political framework, the document frequently reverts back to technical reference points. This feature becomes particularly pronounced when it turns its attention to institutional capacity, state responsiveness and macroeconomic governance.

*Why We Need to Work More Effectively in Fragile States* is not of much assistance in helping to identify broader texts: it references only a single DfID text – *Fragile States: Defining Difficult Environments for Poverty*, a working paper which was drafted by Magüi Moreno Torres and Michael Anderson, members of DfID’s Poverty Reduction in Difficult Environments Team. I will instead use this working paper to identify other textual sources. Torres’s and Anderson’s contribution references *Making Government Work for Poor People* (2001) and *Better Government for Poverty Reduction: More Effective*

*Partnerships for Change* (2003). Both texts will be used to elaborate themes from *Why We Need to Work More Effectively* in more depth and detail.

The document is situated within a lesson-learning framework which seeks to draw upon ‘development expertise’ (26): ‘evidence shows what does – and what does not – work’ (5, 14). It prioritises poverty alleviation, and demonstrates how focused aid interventions can help to alleviate and even overcome ‘chronic state weakness’ (5). It is not merely concerned with the ways in which state fragility negatively impacts development, it also reverses this question to ask how developments interventions can be effectively addressed to the condition of state fragility.

The initial discussion focuses upon the attributes that correspond to this general category of ‘fragility’. It outlines a typology of state fragility, with specific reference to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), before then considering the policy implications of state fragility. In reflecting upon state fragility, the document observes that it necessitates a considerable level of external support and assistance. It is therefore clear that ‘many of the [solutions] to fragility lie beyond the boundaries of a country’ (5, 16). This provides a clear contrast to contextuality, which had previously been more predisposed to emphasise internal capacities.

In engaging with the theme of capacity building (the word ‘capacity’ is used twenty-eight times within the document), the document engages with both internal and external dimensions of statebuilding. *Why We Need to Work More Effectively* broadly converges upon three key themes. The first pertains to the link between poverty alleviation and politics, the second to institutional development and the third – and final – theme to governance-related themes. All three themes touch upon important aspects of contextuality, which include, the relationship between internal and external actors, the relation of formal and informal institutions and the interaction of ‘technical’ and ‘political’ rationalities.

The document’s engagement with poverty alleviation relates to both ‘government’ and ‘governance’. The shift within the policy literature towards the latter reflects a clear understanding that international actors should be less concerned with the objective appearance or form of the state and more concerned with its practical capabilities; this explains how ‘governance’ becomes linked into discussions of ‘capacity’ and ‘capacity-building’. The word

‘governance’ also heralds a shift towards dispersed and networks, which are defined in terms of their functional contribute as opposed to their objective attributes.

The concept of governance also combines political and technical attributes. *Why We Need to Work More Effectively* acknowledges the centrality of politics when it refers to the ‘growing recognition of the need to understand the political incentives and the institutions that affect the prospects for reform’ (14).

A further contribution from Torres and Anderson (2004) is particularly helpful as it helps to further define and clarify some of the central features and attributes of ‘governance’, a term which is, even at the best of times, somewhat nebulous and indistinct. They link governance into the literature on state failure (Helman and Ratner 1992-1993; Zartman 1995), state–societal relations (Engelbert 2000; Midgal 1988) and development (OECD 1996; World Bank 1997). Themes such as the relationship between the state and development, the framework of fragile and conflict-affected states (FCAS), capacity-building in both political and technical terms, partnerships and poverty alleviation also reoccur as ongoing preoccupations.

In taking social processes and interactions as their reference point, Torres and Anderson offer an ‘inside-out’ approach to fragility and development. In situating their analysis at the internal level, they begin with a rejection of the Weberian state. This emphasis is indicated by the fact that they do not equate ‘state strength’ with objective institutions or the state’s ability to exert power over a given population or territory. Rather, they suggest, state strength derives from its ability to perform particular functions – that is, its ability to ensure ‘the effective delivery of basic public goods, including security, social coherence and the ability to raise and spend revenue’ (2004, 13).

In addition to this emphasis upon the state’s output functions, the authors also examine the state’s ability to integrate into societal structures, achieving heightened levels of accountability, transparency and responsiveness in the process. As a starting point, we might therefore distinguish between the functional and relational determinants of state strength. The latter, it should be noted can be subdivided into its internal (state-societal relations, rule of law, civil-military) and external (interactions with international agents) dimensions.

The latter, which Torres and Anderson invoke when they refer to the ‘relational aspects of partnership’ (2004, 11), is of particular importance in post-conflict settings.

*Why We Need to Work More Effectively* explains how the internal-external divide maps onto a political-technical counterpart. It recognises that whereas the former is concerned with internal structures, processes and relations, the latter is instead characterised by a generalising or standardising tenor. By rooting their analysis within the local context, Torres and Anderson decisively – in a way that clearly recalls Doornbos’s earlier advice to ‘de-generalise’ – break with this predisposition to generalise across different contexts. They accordingly observe that ‘there is no single model for how we should work better in fragile states’ (2004, 14).

In opposing itself to a ‘narrow’ or sectoral analysis, *Why We Need to Work Effectively* insists upon a more sustained engagement with wider political processes. With a view to this end, it adapts DfID’s *Drivers of Conflict* framework to demonstrate that poverty, underdevelopment and conflict can only be addressed through an ‘integrated’ approach that addresses key interrelations and interactions. The document therefore aspires to understand poverty, state fragility and conflict as linked and overlapping processes (8). It does not attempt to simplify, but instead insists upon engaging its objects in their full complexity.

The document observes that poverty alleviation is the primary responsibility of the domestic state (16, 26) and suggests that the domestic state provides the policy context within which development occurs. In further underlining the centrality of the state, a separate DfID document expresses a close concern with the ‘quality of government’ (DfID 2001, 9). It will be noted that the word ‘quality’ is of particular significance because it suggests that the domestic state is to be measured against externally derived standards.

It is equally noticeable that each of these contributions fixates upon the domestic state. *Why We Need to Work More Effectively*, in developing the concept of partnership, therefore introduces a whole new order of political analysis, noticeably diverging from the preceding preoccupation with societal reference points. The agenda of state functionality is forcibly reiterated when the document explicitly asks ‘what kind of state functioning is required to be

effective in achieving the Millennium Development Goals' (2004, 9). In continuing to emphasise formal reference points, the document invokes 'development effectiveness' (2004, 3, 9, 12, 13) while highlighting the 'minimal standards' (2004, 5) that should be expected of responsible partners. Here it is quite transparent that it is the partner state, as opposed to the domestic society, that is to be the main focus of political engagement.

In *Why We Need to Work More Effectively*, all three of the conditions of stability that *Why We Need to Work More Effectively* outlines (regulation of participation in government, accountability mechanisms and the autonomy of state institutions) are defined in relation to the actions or inactions of domestic governments (15). Improved service provision, for instance, is referenced on eight separate occasions. In this regard it is significant that the document effectively equates state ownership of the policy agenda with contextual engagement. This explains why, in another instance, DfID expresses concern with the 'level of genuine autonomy that countries have over their own policies' (DfID 2003, 18; DfID 2001, 10).

In the initial discussion of contextuality, contextual engagement took on a much wider scope and significance. A range of reference points beyond the state – the informal, social and cultural – were therefore engaged in more depth and detail. In focusing in upon state functionality, *Why We Need to Work More Effectively* instead offers a much more constrained analysis that is closed in on the domestic state's governance capacities. The terms of reference enfold in upon imperatives of accountability, transparency and responsiveness.

Although policy interventions are undertaken at the domestic level, they ultimately derive from external sources. The participation of local populations is essentially subsequent, occurring after key stipulations have been put in place. The same can be said of context, which only becomes an active consideration when the terms of discussion turn to the question of how implementation can be effectively achieved. Richmond has openly questioned whether this form of engagement can be legitimately bracketed under the heading of 'local ownership' (2012, 355). Jabri similarly observes that: 'The locals, as such, may well be involved, and their involvement may well be indispensable, but are they the authors of the script? The script, as we have seen, derives from elsewhere' (2013, 11).



This governance framework is not endogenous; rather, it is instead *adjusted* to context. By virtue of this post hoc incorporation, context cannot be sustainably conceived as the foundation of engagement. It would be more accurate to observe that it is *subsequently* incorporated into a prior framework of reference. This closely resembles Bickerton's criticism of established statebuilding practices, in which 'domestic' states are not founded 'as self-standing structures, but as nodes integrated into the international system of governance' (2007, 107). David Chandler's *Empire in Denial* (2006) had similarly depicted instances in which 'national' representatives were more accountable to external technocrats and policy-makers than to their own electorate.

In other instances, 'context' is primarily conceived as a mechanism which will enable more effective policy interventions, being conceived as the precursor to enhanced levels of efficiency. *Why We Need to Work More Effectively* therefore asserts that 'the contribution of the international development community could be more effective if it [took] more account of the local social and political context' (9). It is equally striking that 'contextual' engagement is approached, in this instance, from an external perspective. A perspective which is, it should be recognised, diametrically opposed to the core tenets of an 'inside-out' approach to statebuilding.

While many of the objects of the discussion are ostensibly political, there is a clear tendency for them to become refracted through a technical lens. The *OECD Guidelines on Conflict, Peace and Development Co-operation* speak, in this sense, of 'fostering popular participation in the governance agenda' (1997, Point 123). A separate OECD publication suggests that development should be viewed as a mechanism that will 'expand participation in the process of globalisation' (1997b, 14). Here it will be noted that participation is not conceived as a self-contained activity but that it is instead situated within a broader framework of reference.

Through being assimilated into this framework, essentially political processes take on a functional or instrumental appearance. In *Why We Need to Work More Effectively*, this feature is perhaps most clearly illustrated when the discussion converges on the theme of state functionality, that is, the ways in which state institutions can be made to function more effectively, provide 'public

goods' and meet social expectations. Here it will be noted how far we have travelled from the initial themes. In this depiction, the attention of social actors is not focused upon pervasive injustices and inequalities; rather, they instead reach out to optimised public service provision and the benevolent wisdom and foresight of 'good governance' frameworks.

The tightening of the conceptual boundaries is similarly noticeable; previously signifiers such as 'participation' and 'empowerment' may have been left open, with a view to being filled by societal specificity; however, now they have instead enclosed in on very precise meanings, the terms of which have been ordained by the strictures of good governance. Similarly, local agency is not left to its own devices but is instead directed towards precise ends and imperatives, being guided and orientated by the imperatives of heightened efficiency and productivity. The emphasis is at all points functional, being directed towards the capacities that the domestic state must develop and apply. *Why We Need to Work Effectively* therefore evidences an abiding concern with the state's ability to provide 'public goods' and meet public demands and expectations. *Why We Need to Work More Effectively* therefore asserts that 'DfID's working definition of fragile states covers instances where the government cannot or will not deliver core functions to the majority of its people, including the poor' (7). The objective form of the state is not explicitly set out but is instead implied, and in many respects anticipated, by the clear articulation of these functions.

*Why We Need to Work More Effectively* is concerned with an appropriate conduct of the state, setting out the parameters which instil an 'appropriate' and 'proportionate' governmentality. The principles of efficiency of functionality act as structuring influences, implicitly setting out the field of permissible action, foregrounding the extent and scope of state intervention. While DfID documents take care to distance themselves from models or templates, it is quite clear that this is ultimately what is on offer. Torres and Anderson are more candid in this respect when they refer to a 'constriction around' a 'dominant set of policy aspirations' (2004, 10). These 'policy aspirations' bring devotees to worship before the holy trinity of efficiency, productivity and utility. The faithful converge upon these articles of faith, being sustained by the insight that, in the absence of 'state authority, regulation and service delivery, the aspirations of economic

growth and improved human development are elusive' (Torres and Anderson 2004, 10).

'Dominant set of policy aspirations' is therefore shorthand for an agenda of neo-liberal reform. This is made clear both by the fixation upon specific policy interventions (DfID 2003, 1) and by an equally obvious orientation towards 'macroeconomic stability, growth, good governance and social inclusion' (DfID 2003, 1). The respective documents anticipate the enactment of 'sound policies' (18) which are founded within an 'almost universal consensus' (DfID 2001, 11, 15). This consensus reminds us that 'a state which applies rules and policies predictably and fairly, ensures order and the rule of law and protects property will generate confidence and attract more domestic and foreign investment' (11). The prescriptiveness of this neo-liberal agenda is further unravelled when 'accountability, the rule of law, strengthened institutions and competent macroeconomic management' (DfID 2001, 11) are consecrated and elevated as unquestionable articles of faith. The exactness and prescriptiveness of this reform that *Why We Need to Work Effectively* renders can be clearly contrasted with the open-endedness that we encountered in our earlier discussion of contextuality.

This does not cancel or annul the possibility that this agenda will be negotiated in practice (indeed the hybridity branch of the literature reminds us that this will be, in all likelihood, the ultimate outcome). Nonetheless, it does serve to remind us of the persistence and continual reassertion of a managerial project of technical of reform. We are reminded of this, for instance, when reference is made to the 'core functions' of the domestic state; the same can be said of the repeated reiteration of accountability, transparency and responsiveness.

The concept of 'good governance' retains an extraordinary grip upon the imagination of statebuilding actors, further reiterating the more general truth that knowledge functions as an attribute of power. This knowledge establishes the parameters within which this self is produced; it sketches its limitations, boundaries and conditions of possibility. This distinctive power/knowledge nexus is exerted indirectly, being sustained through a formidable architecture that is directed towards the wholesale transformation of state and society. The blurring of the internal and external is an essential prelude in this respect, anticipating a range of interventions that integrate the domestic context into

wider structures of mediation and oversight. Hameiri acknowledges when he refers to interventions that 'seek to facilitate the transnationalisation of the state, so that transnational actors become part of its internal governance' (2010, 96).

It is essential to reiterate that the autonomy of domestic actors is not cancelled or annulled; rather, this freedom is to be actively cultivated, opening up new space into which external influence can reach, inculcating 'appropriate' and 'proportionate' conduct. This aligns perfectly with Foucault's concept of governmentality and Hameiri's allusion to 'forms of political rule' that are produced within the interaction between the internal and external (2010, 3)

*Why We Need to Work More Effectively* sets out how to demonstrate how the state should function, how it should engage with other social actors and how it should provide capable, accountable and responsive forms of governance. The internal and external components of a state governmentality are set out in extensive detail, anticipating heightened levels of economic and political efficacy.

This deployment of governmental technologies serves to remind us that the liberal self is not autonomous; on the contrary, it is instead produced through and within external mediation. It is not the absenting of external influence but rather its refinement and reconfiguration that enables the self to assume form. Civil society and private sector engagement are not conduits that enable a previously suppressed self to emerge; rather, they instead actively sketch the outlines of this self, assuming disciplinary connotations in the process (2004, 13). At this point we are reminded of Richmond's withering dismissal of civil society engagement ('an engineered artifice that floats above and substitutes for the 'local' and for context' (2011, 28)).

In my discussion of *Why We Need to Work More Effectively* I have sought that the liberal self does not, contra liberal ideology, emerge in the space left by the absenting of external control. The ultimate intent is not the establishment of a level of governance that is 'outside of external or Western influence' (Chandler 2013, 26). Quite the contrary – this self is itself the product of technologies of the self which function in subtle and sometimes insidious ways, setting out the parameters of selfhood. This brings to mind, with a peculiar force and intensity, Vivienne Jabri's observation that 'the international, its institutions and normative structuration, weighs heavily on the local' (2013,

9). It similarly recalls Thania Paffenholz's strong opposition to the 'construction of the local and the international as binary opposites' (2015, 858). This echoes David Chandler's previous observation that: '[r]ather than being a barrier to external interference, sovereignty becomes a medium through which non-Western states and societies become integrated into networks of external regulation' (2006, 37). This is a clear inversion of the terms in which we have conventionally theorised sovereignty: far from functioning as the point of denial or limitation, the internal instead functions as the condition of possibility for a whole host of disciplinary and regulatory interventions.

## **Building Peaceful States and Societies**

*Building Peaceful States and Societies* is a practice paper which was published in 2010. It explicitly outlines an integrated approach to conflict intervention and state fragility. It seeks to illustrate how a heightened emphasis upon state–societal relations can contribute to the concrete realisation of the Millennium Development Goals. In engaging at this point, it seeks to demonstrate how statebuilding and peacebuilding – both of which are presented as internalised frameworks (DfID 2010, 7) – can be more completely integrated and aligned. It develops within the Fragile and Conflict-Affected States (FCAS) framework, which means it attempts to integrate an analysis of violent conflict into conventional development paradigms. It develops in three stages: firstly, it defines core concepts such as peacebuilding, statebuilding and state–societal relations; secondly, it establishes the essential features of an integrated approach; and finally, it engages the operational implications that stem from this integrated approach. *Building Peaceful States and Societies* establishes from the outset that it is not concerned with developing a technocratic framework of reference. It emphasises the fundamentally political character of contemporary peacebuilding, highlights the importance of a contextual analysis (it references 'context' on thirty-four occasions) and engages at the 'interface' between state and society.

In my discussion of *Building Peaceful States and Societies* I will specifically engage with the themes of homogeneity and heterogeneity. In engaging at both points, I will explore the full range of discursive possibilities that are presented within this text. I will work upon the basis of the assumption

that heterogeneity relates to the level of predetermination that is evidenced within the text. In reading *Why We Need to Work More Effectively*, I noted a clear distinction between contextuality, which is essentially an open-ended and inductive, and a more precise or enclosed framework of neo-liberal governance. In comparing both frameworks, I sought to demonstrate how context did not provide an underlying basis or foundation, but was instead incorporated, in a largely post hoc manner, into an effectively pre-established agenda of reform. This in turn had important implications for the range of discursive possibilities that could be envisaged and enacted.

In appealing to a 'peacebuilding discourse' that takes social needs and requirements as its core objects of engagement, *Building Peaceful States and Societies* suggests that external actors should play a supportive or facilitative role. This form of external influence does not predetermine, but rather cultivates or enables. It does not impose limitations and is accordingly aligned with the core insight that peacebuilding and statebuilding are internal processes (7); it begins with internal reference points and endogenous developments, insisting that '[democratic reform] will have the greatest impact where international efforts are in line with internal drivers for reform' (27).

*Building Peaceful States and Societies*, in furthering the impression that discursive terms of reference remain open, asserts that international actors should help domestic governments to 'analyse macroeconomic policy options' (31). The word 'options' suggests a field of possible alternatives, along with the ability to choose between them. This, of course, overlooks the essential point that it is a fundamental illusion to speak of 'options' when the terms of reference have been, to all intents and purposes, foreclosed. Under these circumstances it would perhaps be more accurate to speak of variation within predetermined limits.

In acknowledging this feature, Barnes has spoken of a 'discourse of functionality' that is linked into 'effective political processes', 'input legitimacy' and 'output legitimacy' (2009, 3, 11). She clearly appreciates the significance of this constriction observing that, while statebuilding is a predominantly 'endogenous' process, it is 'rooted within a wider system of influence' (Barnes 2009, 11). In further drawing out the essential implication, Barnes highlights

‘subtle influences’ which attempt to ‘find ways to constructively enable rather than undermine/override authentic local initiatives’ (2009, 16).

External actors are therefore confronted by a clear challenge; namely, how to lend external assistance ‘without overriding the very forces that might enable [a] transformation’ (Barnes 2009, 26). Barnes successfully captures one of the central features of context, clearly illustrating that it is not produced in opposition to external influence, but instead emerges through and within a ‘wider system of influence’.

Barnes observes that external influence can be channelled in various ways and accordingly speaks of ‘facilitating’, ‘fostering’ and ‘reframing’. The subtle dimensions of this power are clearly presented when Barnes refers to ‘effective participation’ (6, 28). This term conflates internal and external reference points, simultaneously relating to both domestic agency and an external standard against which it can be judged and evaluated. Further clarification is provided when Barnes refers to ‘participation in policy processes’ (6). This term is significant because it brings together political and technical rationalities, thus inverting binary opposition while inaugurating a complex and novel formulation. Technical points are further invoked within allusions to ‘core’ technical priorities (7, 33), ‘appropriate’ macroeconomic practices and the assertion that it is ‘essential for governments to implement policies that address fiscal and trade deficits and debt arrears [and] stabilise inflation’ (31).

A further innovation is evidenced when the document equates the domestic government’s ownership of the policy agenda with contextual engagement per se. This is significant because, even in instances where the terms of reference initially stretch beyond the state, there is a deeply ingrained predisposition to revert back to this reference point (see *Why We Need to Work More Effectively* and *Building Peaceful States and Societies*). Even when exploring the limitless possibilities of social engagement, the document still evidences a clear tendency to revert back to state rationalities and structures (DfID 2005b; DfID 2010b).

A closer reading of *Building Peaceful States and Societies* reveals the centrality of good governance frameworks, which essentially foreclose many of the possibilities of statebuilding. This introduces a clear internal contradiction – after all, statebuilding is ostensibly grounded within the insight that ‘the people

of conflict-affected societies [must] ultimately own the process of political change if it is to be responsive to their needs' (Barnes 2009, 25). A closer reading of the document reveals the centrality of state rationality, clearly establishing that 'ownership' is to be conceived with reference to the degree of state influence and input.

Under certain circumstances, this ownership can give rise to variation, but only within clear limitations and constraints. Richmond perhaps had this mind when he sceptically appraised forms of ownership that do not significantly allow for 'difference or alterity' (2012, 358). Again, it is reiterated that bottom-up engagement occurs within a specific context and that this context is, in many instances, determining (46). It is of course fundamentally flawed to speak as though participation and ownership can be conceived in opposition to preponderant power relations when they are constituted through and within them. Barnes's previous allusions to 'effective participation' and 'participation within policy processes' (2009, 6) perfectly exemplify this point. For critical observers, the essential objective is to establish the precise meaning and significance of 'ownership' and 'participation'. In many instances, it is the gaps between the different articulations (e.g. between a managerial and transformative 'participation') that are more telling than the invocation itself.

It is in the interaction between the internal and the external levels of governance that these terms assume their precise meaning and significance. Technologies of the self (empowerment, participation, ownership) are situated at the gap between the two levels, subtly circulating and reproducing external influence. *Why We Need to Work More Effectively* makes this interrelation clear when it asserts that external actors should function as 'catalysts for change' at the domestic level (DfID 2005, 11). This invocation of a catalyst is important because it underlines that these processes are already in motion at the domestic level, being subtly incorporated into wider governance structures and processes. This distinctive governmentality does not act upon, but rather through and within, local actors.

This feature is brought to the fore when *Building Peaceful States and Societies* relates how external actors exert influence through 'non-state and informal institutions' (7). Rather than functioning as a site of alterity, the 'informal' and 'social' comes to function as a node of governance, circulating



and reproducing systemic imperatives. In clarifying this point, *Building Peaceful States and Societies* observes that informal institutions ‘provide a bridge between state and society’ (9) and contribute to a ‘deepened’ form of democracy which ‘promote[s] inclusive decision-making and accountability’ (44). The sustained engagement and incorporation of informal actors ultimately reproduces and reinforces the familiar outlines of state functionality.

In the last analysis, the documents can be seen to converge upon a relatively standardised or homogenised framework. Social structures and local agency are incorporated into governance networks (9, 22, 45) while state-societal interactions reinforce and further consolidate state authority; further functional benefits invariably arise as a consequence of this happy political settlement (DfID 2010b, 6). Upon reading through this representation, the reader is confronted by the sense that this a rationalised politics, made to correspond to clear lines and directed towards the realisation and reinforcement of exact expectations. State-societal relations, governance and empowerment are reconfigured in terms that rob them of their contingency and variability, instead reconstituting them as models and techniques of effective governance.

The standardisation of each component precedes the establishment of reciprocal and a sequential ordering. This predictability is an essential precursor to the range of functional benefits that are anticipated. When *Building Peaceful States and Societies* (2010, 12) refers to the ‘quality’ of state-societal relations, it does in the understanding that the actual can be contrasted with the ideal. The invocation of ‘capacity’ and ‘efficiency’, along with the reiteration of job creation and service provision (43), impose a certain homogeneity upon the terms of reference.

*Building Peaceful States and Societies* is therefore concerned with sketching interrelations and with bringing each of the component parts, such as empowerment, informal-institutions and state-societal relations, together into an integrated and mutually reinforcing whole. It approvingly invokes a ‘virtuous circle’ which ‘creat[es] a positive dynamic and strengthen[s] state-societal relations’ (7). This ‘circle’ conjoins the formal political settlement, the state’s ability to perform core functions, and the state’s ability to meet public expectations (13). In establishing a set of reciprocal expectations, this provides the basis of a ‘social contract’ (18), in which the state commits to provide ‘jobs

and growth, delivery of basic services (including security and justice), human rights and democratic processes' (7).

This presents us with a number of features which diverge from the grounding assumptions of contextuality. Firstly, there is a preoccupation with policy and policy implementation, which means that the state and formal institutions appear as the predominant focus and point of engagement. Secondly, the terms of this engagement are often strikingly technocratic, focused upon functional imperatives such as capacity, function and output and with a discernible attempt to standardise and regularise. However, it should be recognised that this does not cancel or negate the initial emphasis upon the 'social' or 'informal'; rather, both reference points are instead incorporated and assimilated into this 'virtuous' and self-reproducing circle. Far from appearing in their mutual opposition, the technical and political are instead interlocked and intertwined.

## **States in Development**

*States in Development: Understanding Statebuilding* (subsequently *States in Development*), which was published in 2008, was authored by Alan Whaites and published by DfID. As a working paper, it was part of a broader DfID project which attempted to establish a common framework of reference for statebuilding interventions. In keeping with a broader paradigm shift within development orthodoxy, the document sought to shift the emphasis towards state capacity, with specific attention to the role of the state within the wider development process. In keeping with the general concept of governance, it does not focus solely upon the state, but instead expands the scope of its analysis to encompass a wider array of social actors. After engaging with different theories of the state, development, and state–societal relations, *States in Development* clarifies key concepts, engages different models of the state and situates the state within its wider social context. In setting out each of these points of engagement, it seeks to demonstrate how the reform of state institutions can contribute to more inclusive and responsive practices of governance.

*States in Development* explicitly references the work of Mick Moore, Sue Unsworth, Joel Migdal, James Putzel and Tom Carothers, among other

sources. Structured into five sections, it initially elaborates the distinctive terminology that has become associated with statebuilding – state, state–societal relations, political settlement. It then develops a model of state responsiveness based upon the state’s ability to meet social needs and requirements. This theme is then developed with reference to political settlements, core state functions and public expectations. Finally, the document progresses to consider service delivery, institutional frameworks and policy reform before outlining a ‘best practice’ framework that establishes a basis for future statebuilding interventions in its concluding stages.

*States in Development* engages at three key points. Firstly, it strongly emphasises the importance of ‘social’ (which is referenced twenty-six times) and ‘political’ engagement; secondly, it engages the concept of institutional and functional variation; finally, it engages the theme of complexity. Although *States in Development* is focused upon state practice, it ultimately, as has already been noted, situates its analysis within a wider social and political context. This point is explicitly made when the document asserts that ‘statebuilding is a national process, a product of state–societal relations that may be influenced by a wide variety of external forces [but which is] primarily shaped by local dynamics’ (4). From the outset, *States in Development* is therefore grounded within contextuality: firstly, it grounds statebuilding within local or endogenous reference points; secondly, it stresses the importance of social reference points; finally, it places clear limitations upon the exertion of external influence.

*States in Development* does not approach statebuilding as a technocratic exercise which is guided and sustained by external knowledge and expertise. Rather, it argues that statebuilding is rooted within the capacities and contributions of the host society (6). By virtue of this prior emphasis, the state is not understood to be an autonomous political entity, but is instead constituted through and within its interaction with the domestic society. In further reiterating this point, the document asserts that ‘wider societies are not bystanders in political settlements or statebuilding’ (4, 9) and observes that state institutions are embedded within a wider range of informal actors and processes. In reiterating this point, it further underscores the need for an analysis of context (‘context’ is used sixteen times throughout the document).

In emphasising the importance of societal reference points, *States in Development* presents statebuilding as an essentially endogenous process. However, it does not deny the significance of 'international drivers', instead according them a secondary significance. It argues strongly in favour of a shift of perspective, affirming that statebuilding needs to be viewed from the 'inside-out' rather than the 'outside-in'. This point is further reiterated when it observes that: 'Much of the recent literature and research analysis on statebuilding has focused more on external interventions than on inner logic' (10).

I have previously acknowledged this point, observing that even contextual engagement has been justified with reference to external priorities. There is a clear danger that the specificity of the individual context will be subsumed within this generalising impulse. Whaites insists that it is essential to break with this level of analysis and instead engage and unravel an 'inner logic'.

In the first sub-section of this chapter I explored how statebuilding texts reconciled the internal and external; the second considered the interaction between the homogenous and the heterogeneous. This final sub-section will now engage the relationship between the general and the specific.

*States in Development* touches upon a number of themes that have been engaged over the course of this chapter. It develops the theme of complexity by considering the interaction between internal and external points of reference (23). It also distinguishes governance as a practice by emphasising the importance of social or informal reference points: 'governance is therefore about more than government systems and capacities'. Equally significantly, the document acknowledges the potential contribution of local knowledge – 'a knowledge of local context is critical to understanding how governance works' (DfID 2006b, 49) – and reiterates that any engagement must be rooted within a sound analysis of the local context – '[g]overnance initiatives at the country level [need to be] based on a much stronger, deeper and more nuanced understanding of context' (DfID 2006b, 69). *Governance, Development and Democratic Politics*, which was previously referenced in the preceding discussion of deepening, also engages with a number of these reference points. It initially establishes a clear distinction between the internal and external (2006b, 10, 23), and in reasserting the centrality of a political framework of reference it entertains a wider degree of institutional variation – accordingly it

defines 'politics' as a process in which 'a society makes choices about the way in which people live together' (ibid, 2, 68).

Each one of these contributions can be traced back to the core insight that there 'is no single best path' (ibid, 37). After anticipating a closer alignment with local knowledge, stressing the political significance of informal actors and reiterating the need to 'nest' within the local political settlement, the document establishes the basis for a more sustained engagement with the specific attributes of the local context. *Governance, Development and Democratic Politics* accordingly asserts that 'what works in one country to improve governance may not work in another' (ibid, 3). Further clarification on this point is provided when it observes that 'democratic politics cannot be transplanted to or imposed upon a country from outside' (ibid, 3, 20). The essential point is clear: democracy should not be conceived at the level of generality; rather, it should instead be understood and analysed at its point of application.

Both *States in Development* and *Governance, Development and Democratic Politics* evidence a clear awareness of the limitations of transferability, generalisation and standardisation. For both documents, context is a limiting factor which inhibits or restrains the generalising impulse. This again brings us back to Whaites's appeal to an 'inner logic' of statebuilding. This logic inverts the Weberian autonomous state, taking societal integration as the condition of state strength. This enables us to understand why 'governance cannot be constructed simply by transferring institutional models or organisational blueprints from rich to poor countries' (2006, 9, 29). In stressing the political character of statebuilding, the document simultaneously underlines the essential inadequacy of a technocratic analysis (2006; 4, 37, 68).

*Governance, Development and Democratic Politics* is, in each of the preceding instances, in line with each of the grounding premises of contextuality. However, it is relatively straightforward to find instances in which there is a reversion to an overarching or generic technical rationality. For instance, *Understanding and Supporting Security Sector Reform* explicitly recognises the potential contribution of 'specialist expertise' (2002, 11). Far from being entirely endogenous, security sector reform is instead depicted as a 'lengthy reform process [which is] heavily dependent on external expertise' (2002, 13). This again points out how essentially political objects of

engagement (e.g. 'political management of [the] security sector') are incorporated into a fundamentally technical framework of reference which is premised upon 'improved effectiveness' (ibid, 14) and functionality.

Upon a closer reading, these technocratic reference points repeatedly come against and conflict with the initial premise of variation and heterogeneity. If context is understood to be the initial foundation of engagement, this raises clear questions about generalisation across contexts. After all, the framework of contextuality initially inculcated the belief that each individual context is essentially *sui generis*. *States in Development* explicitly reproduces this understanding when it observes that 'some states may never look the same [as] our own' (3, 6) and asserts that '[n]one of these [statebuilding] processes should be seen as neatly symmetrical or linear' (5).

In the Foucauldian chapter I referenced the distinctive attributes of technocracy, and drew attention to its essential exteriority, a feature which is embodied within the fact that, in the words of Centro, it ultimately aspires to the '[imposition] of a single, exclusive policy paradigm based on the application of instrumentally rational techniques' (1993, 314). In insisting upon the contingency of the statebuilding process, Whaites breaks with this framework and instead situates analysis at the level of contingent interactions within society. This is the meaning of his allusion to processes that are 'messy, implicit and non-linear' (6). The document then asserts the centrality of 'political' state-societal relations and observes that statebuilding cannot be reduced to 'any noble statebuilding ideal' (10). As a consequence, contingency, specificity and the political come to function as the respective features of a discursive triad. *States in Development* reproduces the understanding when it asserts that 'statebuilding is a value neutral term' (4). Here it is implied that statebuilding is a neutral instrument that enables the more complete flowering of an inner potentiality. Upon this reading, statebuilding cannot be traced back to a standardising, rationalising or generalising impulse, but instead enables states to be adjusted to the 'realities of their own contexts' (3).

*States in Development* therefore repeatedly emphasises and reiterates the importance of specificity. In initially emphasising the importance of domestic capacities and contributions, it asserts that 'statebuilding efforts need to be shaped and led from within if they are to be legitimate and sustainable' (7, 21).

This logically implies that externalised frameworks of engagement will almost invariably fail; thus, ‘international actors should not attempt to import and impose solutions and policy prescriptions from the outside’ (44). The implication is that any solutions should be rooted within the specificity of the individual context.

This assertion of an endogenous process clashes with the suggestion that statebuilding rests upon ‘various and sometimes far-reaching degrees of external involvement’ (16). In contrast to the proposition of a framework of engagement which is open to individual specificity, the document invokes ‘international efforts [which] also have a particular view of what constitutes an effective functioning state’ (16). The significance of the words ‘particular’ and ‘effective functioning’ in the preceding quotation should be acknowledged – they correspond to a clear convergence upon a general model of the functional state. A closer reading of *Governance, Development and Democratic Politics* (DfID 2006b) similarly highlights a range of measures that apply independently of context. This is true of the framework for capable, accountable and responsive (CAR) states (DfID 2006b, 37). It also applies to the discussion of the state’s role within the overall development process (ibid, 37), core aspects of economic governance and the provision of public services (ibid, 28, 57).

In directly refusing the proposition of a neutral framework of engagement, *States in Development* explicitly states that ‘the UK is not neutral on questions of statebuilding [because it] has explicit commitments to encourage statebuilding that ultimately brings benefit to the poor’ (6). These ‘explicit commitments’ take the form of a set of general propositions which have direct implications for broad swathes of public policy. Although the provision of public goods in areas such as education, health and security can be justified in objective terms, it is nonetheless clear that this general ‘good governance’ framework takes us some distance from the proposition that it is inappropriate and counterproductive to impose general frameworks, models or templates onto individual contexts (3, 4, 6, 20).

This contradiction between generality and specificity reoccurs at other points within the document. After strongly emphasising the importance of context and endogenous agency, *States in Development* engages with the proposition that ‘some institutional arrangements may work better than others’

(16). Here it is particularly telling that these institutional arrangements are discussed at a general level of analysis. They are not discussed in relation to, but rather in detachment from, the operational context. In this respect, the document closely resembles contributions to the literature review chapter (Reilly 2001; Belloni 2004; Reynolds 2005) which argued that certain electoral systems were more conducive to peacebuilding ends than others.

This generalising impulse is similarly reproduced when the document engages with deficits or limitations within the existing knowledge base. After lamenting a 'poverty of knowledge' (6) the document expresses its exasperation with the fact that 'there is remarkably little sharing of statebuilding experience across countries and among donors' (36, 46). The document does not acknowledge, or engage critically, with the fact that, under certain circumstances, it is, by virtue of the fact that any 'solution is context-specific, inappropriate to seek a general remedy of peacebuilding problems. To the same extent, the text fails to critically disassemble the proposition that the contradictions of statebuilding can be overcome through an enhanced knowledge base.

The recurrence of this fundamental contradiction can also be observed in other instances. *States in Development* expresses its understanding that state functions cannot be understood or applied at a general level of analysis (4), which suggests that 'capacity', 'strength' and 'weakness' can only be understood in their specific embodiment, and not as a general category or concept. This point is further developed when the document asserts that the model of the social contract in which the legitimisation of the state is linked to its provision of certain public goods is not necessarily transferable across contexts. However, in other parts of the document the opposite conclusion is instead proffered. This is clearly the case when the discussion turns to the question of how enhanced state–societal interactions can help to legitimise the domestic political settlement (8). In other writings, a clear link is also established between improved policy provision (Fritz and Menocal 2007, 5, 13) and heightened levels of political legitimacy (Fritz and Menocal 2007, 16).

*States in Development* similarly reverts to the level of generality when it engages with the 'core' features of state functionality. After it first defines 'core' functions (7), the document then sets out standards and requirements that



relate to state performance in a number of key areas (security, revenue, law). The very term 'core functions' (8, 16) suggests a constriction upon very exact and precise set of priorities. The generality of the discussion is further reiterated by the document's use of the word 'public good'. Whereas contextuality is premised upon context specificity, this conception of 'public goods' instead presents us with a general category that applies irrespective of context. Comparable to 'function', 'capacity' and 'strength', the term operates at the level of generality.

After initially establishing the basis for an analysis grounded within the 'social', 'political' or 'contextual', *States in Development* establishes a clear expectation that the document will correspond to and reproduce the principle of specificity. However, it is as if the document is unable to follow it through to the logical conclusion implicit in the initial analysis. Ultimately, we encounter instances in which the specific goes against the local. A similar observation can also be made with regard to the textual treatment of complexity, which is in many senses the derivative of an approach premised upon specificity. Whereas generalising frameworks of reference seek to simplify, an analysis at the level of specificity instead implies an analysis that does not attempt to reduce its object of reference to a prior template or design. Upon a closer reading, *States in Development* appears to combine both approaches. This is perhaps illustrated most clearly when it attempts to apply a model of the social contract (8), even after openly acknowledging that other models of this nature were insufficiently adjusted to the complexities and contingencies of the individual context.

Likewise, the discussion of state responsiveness examines the functions of the state and the various ways in which this interaction reinforces the political settlement that is in place at the domestic level (11). Although the reference points here are obviously political, it is relatively easy to see how their interactions could be, and indeed are, recapitulated within a framework that reduces them to a range of technical dimensions and attributes. As a consequence of this discursive realignment, inherently complex and contingent processes and interactions would become reduced to a set of regularities, continuities and anticipatable outputs (11).

*States in Development* provides a further illustration of this dynamic when it outlines its general conception of statebuilding. It initially highlights the volatility of the process by counterpoising the complexities and uncertainties of the statebuilding process to the continuities and smooth progressions of developmental theory. The essential implication is that statebuilding actors should resist the deeply rooted temptation to make the 'actual' correspond to the 'ideal'. Their emphasis should instead be upon adjusting and aligning their own contributions with the practices, processes and relations that adhere within the domestic context.

This adjustment to the specificities of the local context is in large part driven by the core insight that, under conditions of complexity, it is difficult for statebuilding actors, whether internal or external, to act with any degree of certainty. Indeed, far from guiding developments at the local level, external actors are, to all intents and purposes, responding to them (23). Given each of these propositions, it comes as something of a surprise when the document suddenly reiterates the potential contribution of sequencing and prioritisation (21). Here, in apparent refusal of an inherently complex social reality, we encounter the proposition that this reality can be tamed by the application of the tools and techniques of rational management. After initially encountering a framework of reference that stresses the built-in limitations of generalisation, standardisation and rationalisation, we then encounter a framework that constructs its foundations on each of these limitations.

## **Conclusion**

In the initial stages of this chapter I observed that contextuality is essentially concerned with the question of how local specificity can be integrated into statebuilding frameworks. Whereas deepening takes a broadened framework of democratic engagement as its point of engagement, contextuality instead begins from the premise that a more sustained engagement with context will mitigate or even overcome the rationalising and externalising distortions that have occurred to the detriment of previous statebuilding interventions.

Contextuality therefore corresponds to a fundamental shift within the theory and practice of statebuilding. It does not imply a reorientation within the

terms of a pre-given framework of reference; it instead implies a different framework of reference altogether. Contextuality, in other words, implies a qualitative shift which has clear and direct implication for the conceptual, theoretical and practical components of contemporary statebuilding. This chapter did not seek to engage contextuality as a general proposition; rather, it sought to understand how this framework has attempted to overcome tension at three points. These tensions adhere within the interaction between: the internal and external, the homogenous and heterogeneous and the general and particular.

My discussion of the relation between the internal and external began by observing that liberal theory had established and entrenched a definitive opposition between these two points of reference. Liberal peacebuilding does not question this opposition but rather seeks to reproduce it. I then sought to demonstrate how the internal-external divide is, under conditions of neo-liberal governance, altered and reconfigured. My core argument was that the internal and external should not be understood in opposition, but rather in their mutual relation. This implies an analysis that is able to engage with the question of how the internal level of governance is co-opted into the consolidation and reproduction of an external and neo-liberal agenda. In seeking to engage and further develop this proposition, I suggested that the concept of the 'social' could be of potential assistance.

At the beginning of the chapter I noted that the 'social' is closely intertwined with the 'contextual'. Both 'social' and 'contextual', in their initial formulation within the framework of contextuality, suggested a site of alterity and spontaneity. Conversely, when we engaged these points at the level of given policy texts, we encountered a series of subtle manoeuvres, in which the 'social' and 'contextual' became incorporated into a self-reproducing and self-replicating framework of reference. In a very similar manner, the internal was not rendered as a point of denial or refusal, but rather as a means through which external derived priorities and imperatives are embodied and circulated.

In engaging with the policy texts, my primary sense was of a subtle incorporation, in which the 'free' agency of domestic actors was adapted, aligned and incorporated into a distinctive neo-liberal governmentality. This did not imply a denial or restriction of context, but rather its active incorporation and

deployment. In stressing this point, I sought to demonstrate how the internal and external were conjoined in often complex and contingent ways. From my perspective, this is most clearly illustrated in instances where 'social', 'cultural' or 'informal' objects become incorporated into broader structures of neo-liberal governance.

I observed that this feature often resulted in a reversion back towards an agenda focused upon 'good governance' and the reform of the domestic state. Although the engagement of informal and social institutions ostensibly corresponded to increased variation and heterogeneity, I noticed that there was a definite tendency for the discussion to revert back to a more delimited agenda. Concepts such as 'effective participation' and 'participation within policy processes' underlined how the agency of social or informal actors had become subject to a subtle reconfiguration and alignment. However, this influence did not deny or remove the agency of local actors; rather, it sought to work through and within it. Contextual engagement, under these conditions, becomes divorced from its transformative or emancipatory connotations and instead reproduces a range of neo-liberal imperatives.

This brings me back to my initial proposition, which is that the internal is implicit within the external, just as the external is implicit within the internal. This echoes contributions from Bleisemann de Guevara, Klaus Schlichte and Joel Migdal, who have consistently elaborated and developed this point. Oliver Richmond (2011, 14) also presents the 'local' as an intermediary point which conjoins the internal and external.

In privileging a very specific model and outline of the state epitomised in allusions to the 'core functions' of the state, this statebuilding discourse reproduces a range of homogenous effects. Similarly, a neo-liberal discourse of functionality and efficiency further delimits the discursive range within which variation can emerge and consolidate. The emphasis upon Capable, Accountable and Responsive (CAR) states results in a convergence upon a set of pre-eminent priorities. In addition to producing a range of external dimensions and attributes, this also implies a clear delimitation and constriction of the range of permissible deviation. A domestic context previously characterised by complexity, contingency and variation is now replaced by regularities, continuities and foregrounded outcomes.

The two categories of generality and specificity relate to the level at which the text engages. Contextuality suggests a conscious and deliberate orientation away from generalised perspectives and a more sustained engagement with the specificity of the local. In engaging with the statebuilding texts, I noticed that the specific and the local frequently became functionalised and incorporated into broader frameworks of reference. The specific does not therefore stand in opposition to the general, but instead appears as a means through which it is reproduced and circulated. In engaging with the statebuilding texts, the reader may also note the persistence of generality; that is, the predisposition to understand and assess statebuilding at a general level of analysis. The focus upon governance and policy reform brings the discussion back to templates and models which can be generally applied across different contexts. Similarly, the repeated recourse to a technocratic discourse returns the reader to a general level of analysis. This attribute can also be identified within a range of neo-liberal reference points which interject imperatives of efficiency and functionality. Even in those instances where informal institutions and actors are engaged, the discussion evidences a strong tendency to revert back to a formalised agenda focused upon state rationality and functionality.

## Chapter Six

# Complementarity and Integration

### Introduction

The Introduction and Literature Review chapters suggested that the comprehensive approach to post-conflict peacebuilding emerged in response to the complexities and contingencies of contemporary conflict. The so-called 'New Wars', to this extent, provided the backdrop against which the approach developed and consolidated. 'New' forms of conflict places new demands on the international system, thereby necessitating new techniques of intervention and engagement. Policy wisdom increasingly converged upon the insight that conflict should be engaged within an 'integrated' or 'whole-of-government' approach that addressed itself to a multiplicity of points. Conflict was increasingly theorised as a complex system, thereby necessitating flexible, adaptive and networked conflict response capabilities. The emergence and development of 'whole-of-government', comprehensive and integrated approaches were intelligible in this context.

Prior to the development of a practice of post-conflict peacebuilding, democracy promotion/ governance, development and security had originally been conceived as sectoral concerns. While this specialisation bequeathed obvious benefits, it simultaneously imposed equally obvious limitations and constraints, most obviously restricting attempts to engage with the interstices between each individual sector. The comprehensive approach therefore enabled peacebuilding actors to break down 'firewalls' and address concomitant contradictions and tensions. The logic of the approach ordained that, under ideal circumstances, the respective components of post-conflict peacebuilding (democracy, development and security) would be reinforcing. Kofi Annan implicitly invoked these interlinkages when he called for 'a broader focus on the nature of sustainable peace and its building-blocks, such as social and economic development, good governance and democratization' (UN 2001).

At the beginning of the 1990s, international policy actors increasingly came to realise the essential interdependence of each constitutive element. By the end of the decade this understanding, which I refer to as complementarity, had assumed the status of a policy axiom (Jahn 2007). This established a

problematic of integration (the circumstances under which integration could be most completely realised and embodied) – this explains why the theory and practice of peacebuilding became deeply pragmatic, orientated towards logistical questions and themes. Paris accordingly observes that: ‘Instead of investigating the underlying assumptions of peace-building, most works on the subject have sought to provide practical recommendations aimed at improving the ability of peace-builders to control local conflicts.’ (2002, 656)

Institutional actors have worked within this pragmatic horizon, orientating themselves towards an ‘appropriate’ ordering of the constitutive elements. Chapman and Vaillant observe that: ‘In recogni[sing] that development, politics and security are linked, DFID’s strategic approach has consistently involved a whole-of-government approach’ (2010, viii). Complementarity takes the three component parts of post-conflict peacebuilding – democracy, development and security – as its objects of reference. It does not understand each element in isolation, but rather within their interrelation.

Jahn goes as far as to suggest that the ‘fetishisation’ of integration (Bellamy 2004, 2; OECD 2010) by peacebuilding actors has produced a ‘tragedy of liberal diplomacy’ (2007, 226). She suggests that integration is a surface-level concern that has diverted attention away from underlying tensions, with the consequence that they continually reassert and impose themselves. This explains why liberal peacebuilding appears doomed to perpetually repeat its own contradictions in subsequent effect.

In highlighting this feature, Jahn relates one of the abiding perversities of liberal peacebuilding; namely, that repeated failure does not undermine the conceptual, theoretical or doctrinal base but instead serves to further reinforce it. While peacebuilding actors acknowledge the limitations of the integrative thesis, they are ultimately unable to escape it. The OECD, for instance, evidenced an abiding faith in this article of faith when it issued a plaintive appeal for the ‘development of mechanisms for systematically drawing lessons learned and building internal capacity to bring political, military and development responses into coherent and effective packages’ (OECD 1997, 27).

Complementarity therefore originates within the proposition that an increased integration of democracy, development and security can overcome or

'reconcile' deeply rooted contradictions. Preceding chapters have focused much more closely upon the first two components, with the deepening chapter addressing itself to the theme of democratisation and the contextuality chapter concerning itself with the transfer of development paradigms across different contexts. Security, in comparison, has only received the most fleeting of treatments. In addressing itself to this theme in more detail, this chapter will work within a stabilisation framework. *Security and Stabilisation: The Military Contribution* defines stabilisation in the following terms:

Stabilisation is the process that supports states which are entering, enduring or emerging from conflict in order to: prevent or reduce violence; protect the population and key infrastructure; promote political processes and governance structures which lead to a political settlement that institutionalises non-violent conflicts for power; and prepares for sustainable social and economic development. (MoD 2014, xi)

This very closely resembles the definitions of post-conflict peacebuilding that were given in the introductory chapter. Both stabilisation and post-conflict peacebuilding initiatives engage in the aftermath of violent conflict (it should, however, be noted that stabilisation also engages at an earlier stage and that 'post-conflict' has increasingly been dropped in favour of 'peacebuilding'). In both instances, the engagement of internal actors has a normative and functional basis, being grounded in the first instance as a principled commitment and in the second as the anticipation of improved operational outcomes. Significantly, prior to 2007 the Stabilisation Unit, an inter-departmental unit which brings together the contributions of the DfID, the FCO and the MoD, was known as the Post-Conflict Reconstruction Unit (PCRU). Stabilisation documents therefore enable me to engage with security, the final component within the 'holy trinity' of post-conflict peacebuilding.

In discussing the discursive integration of democracy, development and security, I highlight the tensions and contradictions that arise when each of these components are integrated and aligned. Whereas complementarity is essentially an operational imperative directed towards the establishment of the conditions under which each element can become mutually reinforcing, critical analysis is instead directed towards the point/s at which the respective parts come apart. In opposition to the aforementioned logic of inclusion, the preponderant dynamic is one of exclusion, breakage and fracture. It can



therefore be legitimately observed that core statebuilding concepts ‘mask the inherently political and ideological underpinnings of all concepts of state construction and reconstruction, as well as the conflict-ridden and dynamic nature of such processes’ (Hameiri 2010, 38).

Hameiri’s contribution traces these tensions back to the ideological foundations of statebuilding. This feature helps to explain why liberal peacebuilding is caught in a perpetual oscillation, ultimately failing to achieve final closure. The essential purpose of statebuilding is to conceal or occlude this fact, understating and obfuscating tension in the process. The essential contribution of critical analysis is to strip away this façade, revealing tension and contradiction in their true significance.

Whereas the Deepening chapter focused upon democratisation and the Contextuality chapter focused upon the integration of context into general frameworks, the current chapter is concerned with the question of how the constitutive elements of the comprehensive approach are textually aligned and integrated. In contrast to the other chapters, I do not structure this chapter entirely around individual texts. I begin by providing an overview or summary of each individual core text, not with the intention to engage complementarity or the comprehensive approach, but rather, to provide a general overview of the text. I begin by discussing *The UK Government’s Approach to Stabilisation*, then engage *Responding to Stabilisation Challenges in Hostile and Insecure Environments: Lessons Identified* (subsequently titled *Responding to Stabilisation Challenges*) and finally conclude with *Security and Stabilisation: The Military Contribution* (subsequently *Security and Stabilisation*).

I will then attempt to identify how each text internally structures and arranges democracy, development and security. I begin with democracy, proceed to consider development and then conclude with security. I will primarily focus upon *Security and Stabilisation: The Military Contribution* because it is far longer than either of its two counterparts (*The UK Government’s Approach to Stabilisation* and *Responding to Stabilisation Challenges in Hostile and Insecure Environments: Lessons Identified*). However, I also engage the other two documents on a more infrequent basis. The first two texts, *The UK Government’s Approach to Stabilisation* and *Responding to Stabilisation in Hostile and Insecure Environments*, were

published by the cross-department Stabilisation Unit, whereas the final text, *Security and Stabilisation: The Military Contribution*, was published by the MoD.

## **The UK Government's Approach to Stabilisation**

*The UK Government's Approach to Stabilisation* is a short, policy-orientated 11-page document published by the Stabilisation Unit in 2014. It sets out the general principles and priorities that underpin the UK's government's approach to stabilisation and provides a clear framework of reference for practical interventions that operate within this framework. It further develops a 2008 report of the same name and functions as part of a general strategy that also incorporates *HMG's National Security Strategy* (2010), the *Strategic Defence and Security Review* (2010) and the *Building Stability Overseas Strategy* (2011).

The document defines stabilisation as 'an integrated, cross-government approach to conflict resolution' (2) which incorporates military and civilian dimensions and operates under civilian leadership (5). While *The UK Government's Approach to Stabilisation* distinguishes between stabilisation, conflict prevention, statebuilding and peacebuilding, it observes that the Stabilisation Unit is engaged with each one of these activities. This serves to further reiterate the inter-connectedness of peacebuilding and stabilisation activities.

Stabilisation interventions are, as this document establishes, undertaken within conflict-affected countries – this includes countries that are entering, enduring or emerging from violent conflict. Post-conflict intervention is therefore one aspect of stabilisation. In exploring the concept of stabilisation in more depth, *The UK Government's Approach to Stabilisation* reiterates the central role that institutions play in helping to manage, mediate or mitigate conflict. *The UK Government's Approach to Stabilisation* suggests that institutional capacity is the central determinant of whether a state will effectively respond to violent conflict.

Violent conflict – and it should be noted that the distinction between conflict and violent conflict is crucial – is both a cause and consequence of poor institutional performance. The task of institutions is not to absent or remove conflict, but to ensure that it is more effectively managed – '[social institutions]

channel conflict, avoiding recourse to violence and facilitating positive change'. This helps us to see how the document discursively links democracy and security. By virtue of the fact that insecurity is rooted within relations and processes that adhere at the domestic level, it can be said to be a subjective condition which is rooted within accountability, inclusivity and responsiveness (or the lack thereof). Despite the fact that these are political relations, they are ultimately discussed in terms that revert to cause-effect models, with the consequence that each component becomes part of an interlocking circle. Accordingly, it is established that 'without some form of legitimate political authority immediate stability and security will be compromised and the pursuit of longer-term statebuilding will not be feasible' (7).

This establishes that the political settlement and the concept of governance are of the utmost importance, a point that is reiterated when *The UK Government's Approach to Stabilisation* insists upon a political framework of analysis that is grounded within political relations and interactions within the host society. The document emphasises that 'the stabilisation approach [has] an intensely political orientation and focus' (4) before equating stabilisation with 'political processes which will deliver long-term stability' (1, 4, 5). This political is further emphasised when the document asserts that 'the stabilisation approach requires people to work together, rather than just provide the output' (9, 10). Again, the relational dimensions of governance are again reiterated, with specific attention to social reference points.

This focus upon the political dimensions of stabilisation is important because it draws a whole range of technocratic assumptions into question; this is the principal inference that should be extracted from the assertion that 'progress is incremental and never linear' (3, 11). Complexity and contingency, we are again reminded, are both corollaries of the 'political'. The absencing of linearity brings a host of struggles, contestations and power relations to the foreground, reminding us that stabilisation is deeply contingent, being predicated upon a whole host of anticipating factors. Stabilisation is open-ended and inductive (2, 3). Precisely because stabilisation is concerned with interventions within 'politically messy, violent, challenging and non-permissive environments' (2), abstract or rationalised templates cannot be engineered and applied from without; rather, local actors should instead be empowered and

provided with the tools that will enable them to adjust to core challenges and constraints (2, 3).

A further point of clarification is provided when the document observes that 'structural stability' is 'the longer-term goal to which stabilisation contributes' (1). This suggests that stabilisation is, in contrast to development, a relatively short-term commitment (11). 'Structural stability' is a rephrasing, in which the imperatives of peacebuilding (which is addressed to the structural causes of violent conflict) are refracted through a security lens. Stabilisation can therefore be said to be the security component of peacebuilding strategy.

*The UK Government's Approach to Stabilisation* makes it clear that stabilisation is not a purely internal concern. Rather, it is made quite clear that stabilisation is dependent upon various forms of external assistance and support. The ability of external actors to bring about positive change is, however, limited, and it is social actors that ultimately have the ability to bring about positive change. It is therefore openly acknowledged, from the outset, that 'external support cannot create legitimate political authority' (2). There is a clear awareness that excesses of external influence will ultimately act to the detriment of peacebuilding goals (2). Coercive power is associated with various inefficiencies and pathologies; under optimal circumstances (e.g. when end objectives are achieved), power is restricted to the outer extremities or even entirely absented (11).

This economy of power nonetheless rests upon an essential ambiguity. After all, the document's very title – *The UK Government's Approach to Stabilisation* – takes an external actor as its lead protagonist. In expanding upon this theme, the document proceeds to set out the various ways in which external influence can help to cultivate positive endogenous developments (2, 3, 5, 8).

This oscillation is also evidenced in other instances. In focusing its analytical gaze upon each individual society, the document creates the clear impression that the specificity (e.g. the precise structures, relations and interactions that are in place) of each individual context is its preponderant concern (5). After privileging these political objects, the document then proceeds to suggest that the core contribution of the Stabilisation Unit is to 'bring together expertise' from each of the three government departments (DfID,

FCO, MoD). After bringing the foundations of expert knowledge into question, *The UK Government's Approach to Stabilisation* then reasserts its importance. By way of further elaboration, the document then openly celebrates the potential contribution of improved logistical co-ordination and inter-departmental co-operation ('close co-ordination is required across departments (4, 5)). The outline of an enhanced liberal peacebuilding is clearly anticipated within innovations such as the secondment of experts, more flexible funding arrangements and improved practices of inter-departmental co-operation.

*The UK Government's Approach to Stabilisation* engages with a number of features and themes that were previously discussed in the chapters concerned with deepening and contextuality. It situates its analysis within the host society, insists upon a political analysis, rejects technocratic assumptions and stresses the inherent complexity of stabilisation interventions. It establishes clear limitations upon external influence and stresses that local agents should take the lead and assume the initiative. However, each of these emphases and assertions is underpinned by a certain ambiguity, and it is relatively straightforward to find technocratic reference points, generalising assumptions and depoliticised points of reference.

## **Responding to Stabilisation Challenges in Hostile and Insecure Environments: Lessons Identified**

*Responding to Stabilisation Challenges in Hostile and Insecure Environments: Lessons Identified* (subsequently *Responding to Stabilisation Challenges*), which was published in 2010, clearly defines stabilisation as a foundation which will establish 'the conditions required for further security sector reform' (26). This clearly resembles the account of stabilisation that is provided in *The UK Government's Approach to Stabilisation*. This document seeks to develop lessons that can be practically applied in the course of conflict interventions. In seeking to extract lessons that can be applied across contexts, it appeals to an established monitoring and evaluation system (14) and a 'continuous cycle', which feeds practice into knowledge and practice into knowledge (27).

This practically applicable and transferable knowledge can be utilised across a range of different geographical contexts, e.g. the Balkans, Afghanistan

and Iraq. And the document appeals to ‘generic lessons that are relevant to other conflict environments’ (4). ‘Generic’ implies a set of lessons that apply irrespective of context. The document then adapts the core tenet of contextuality to argue that any solution must be adjusted to each specific context (the initial subsection is entitled ‘All Conflicts Are Different’). *Responding to Stabilisation Challenges* approvingly elevates these ‘generic’ lessons while also casting a disapproving glare in the direction of ‘standardised templates’ – the very term comes laden with pejorative overtones. In working towards a sustainable equilibrium, the document explicitly asserts that: ‘Approaches to stabilisation should be tailored to address the specific characteristics of the conflict. This requires knowing when and when not to use lessons effectively from other contexts’ (1).

In seeking to reconcile democracy and security, the document emphasises the need to focus upon the ‘specific characteristics of the conflict’. It suggests that community engagement can overcome universalising biases and root stabilisation within the needs, priorities and requirements of local communities (15). Engagement with the local community will also enable external actors to align their interventions with the specific attributes of each individual context. In emphasising the principle of specificity, the document ascribes to the need for a more sustained engagement with ‘non-state forms of local governance, security, justice and dispute resolution’ and the state–societal interface (2, 15).

However, external actors do not simply seek to reproduce the contextual or local. *Responding to Stabilisation Challenges* does not present any sense of a naïve or uncritical romanticisation of the ‘local’. Indeed, precisely the opposite understanding is advanced: namely, that external actors will, in transferring lessons from another context, actively contest and challenge the ‘perceptions, relationships and behaviours of local politically significant actors’ (1, 10). This implication is further drawn out when the document discusses the emergence of an integrated approach to stabilisation with reference to the efforts of ‘a single multi-disciplinary and multi-departmental team’ (9). Here it is noticeable that the emergence of an integrated approach is not contingent upon the active engagement of local actors but is instead dependent upon the question of whether departmental actors are able to sufficiently combine or ‘pool’ their

individual capacities or capabilities. It is consequently asserted that: 'Integration is primarily driven by the process of people from different institutions and different disciplines working side by side to ensure that their perspectives and activities reinforce each other' (9).

*Responding to Stabilisation Challenges*, in stressing the political significance of 'pooling', similarly places a strong emphasis upon external actions and contributions. Even in those instances where this externalised framework engages with context, it is ultimately predisposed to reconfigure and rearrange it. Similarly, even in those instances when contextual limitations are identified, they ultimately give way to the imperative to identify general or transferable lessons.

*The UK Government's Approach to Stabilisation* repeatedly acknowledges that stabilisation is an essentially political concern (1, 25). However, despite granting a central pre-eminence to politics, it evidences a clear predisposition to revert to technocratic themes such as improved planning, programme management and monitoring (9). This is clearly evidenced when it stresses the need to 'improve the flow of information, contribute to a shared understanding of stabilisation challenges and responses [and] reduce policy and design "silos"' (1). Further elaboration, in the form of short and long-term objectives, contracting and funding systems and lesson-learning frameworks, are duly provided. Again, depoliticisation and a policy fetishisation reassert themselves as core textual attributes.

These attributes clearly contrast with a more political thread which is ultimately orientated towards the 'broad range of deep-rooted, complex political problems that cause conflict and insecurity' (3). Precisely because violent conflict is multi-faceted and multi-dimensional, it can only be engaged through a political approach that is directly addressed to deeply rooted tensions and contradictions. This thread intertwines with its technical counterpart, originating a tension that is continually reiterated over the course of the policy document.

## **Security and Stabilisation: The Military Contribution (2009)**

Joint Doctrine Publication 3-40, which is entitled *Security and Stabilisation: The Military Contribution* (subsequently *Security and Stabilisation*), is a document of more than 250 pages which was published in 2009. In its own

words, it seeks to engage the ‘what’, ‘when’ and ‘how’ of stabilisation. It defines stabilisation as an intervention that ‘supports states which are entering, enduring or emerging from conflict’ (xi). The ‘what’ relates to the internal and external dimensions of stabilisation strategy – state fragility, relationships between stabilisation actors, the historical development of stabilisation frameworks; ‘when’ to the structure of stabilisation strategies – sequencing of reforms, establishment of general parameters of engagement, respective stages of strategy; and ‘how’ to the practical application of stabilisation strategy – implementation, measurement and evaluation.

*Security and Stabilisation* defines stabilisation environments as instances in which the ‘[c]onflict is severe enough to undermine the relationship between state and society’ (13). This fracturing of state–societal relations creates a set of circumstances in which institutions are no longer able to function effectively and manage conflict. This leads to a situation in which an ‘integrated conflict management system’ (53) is no longer capable of meeting the security needs of citizens or sustaining and embedding legitimacy.

*Security and Stabilisation* engages at this level of analysis when it considers interactions between different social actors (27). Stabilisation frameworks are essentially concerned with the ‘way that political power is organised, and who wields that power’ (76). This explains why security actors have evidenced a heightened concern with governance-related themes. If violent conflict is deeply rooted within political processes, structures and relations, then a conventional military response will fail to address the root causes of violence (91). *Security and Stabilisation* makes this point when it asserts that military force is ‘but one element required for the delivery of security and stabilisation’ (62). Security, to put it slightly differently, requires a strategy which encompasses and incorporates a broad range of security actors. The reverse also applies: the promotion of democracy and development can only be achieved through a more sustained engagement with security-related questions. The document reiterates this point when it observes how ‘military forces have been drawn into wider stabilisation tasks that have gone beyond the delivery of security’ (20).

Democracy, development and security are not therefore sectoral concerns but can only be sufficiently engaged within a framework that engages



at a political level of analysis. This is why *Security and Stabilisation* asserts the 'primacy of political process' (59) and observes that security sector reform (SSR) is a 'primarily political undertaking' (92). Stabilisation itself, by virtue of the fact that it incorporates broader economic, political and social reference points, can be traced back to this insistence upon an explicitly political framework of reference. *Security and Stabilisation* therefore asserts that stabilisation can only be achieved by an approach that 'pursue[s] a workable political settlement and create[s] entry points for sustainable development' (13). This creates the clear impression that stabilisation is essentially concerned with a set of indirect interventions and with creating a context in which domestic actors can achieve and establish a stable political environment. Stabilisation interventions therefore attempt to 'achieve a political settlement between the host nation government, competing elites and the wider population'.

*Security and Stabilisation* engages within a political framework of reference. In working towards more effective strategies and methods of counter-insurgency, it highlights the potential contribution that democratic reform and development can make. Instead of enabling host-society interests and priorities, democracy promotion is instead presented as a means through which societies can be stabilised in accordance with wider systemic preferences. Exteriority, which was understated or nuanced in the Deepening and Contextuality chapters, is therefore made explicit (16, 57). Whereas deepening and contextuality had rendered a subtle guidance or orientation, the securitisation of local agency is voiced in a more coercive vernacular.

*Security and Stabilisation* develops a 'political' analysis of insecurity which is elaborated and developed with reference to a number of intersecting and overlapping drivers of conflict; these include insecurity, underdevelopment and poor governance (7). Stabilisation is therefore a phased strategy addressed to each of these points. Stabilisation actors do not engage each point in isolation, but instead direct their attention to core relations and interactions. The general theme of integration is in turn articulated in logistical (interaction between different stabilisation actors), conceptual (key concepts that underpin stabilisation) and temporal (shape, secure, hold and develop) terms.

In each of these respects, stabilisation appears as a comprehensive approach to conflict intervention. The stabilisation framework closely resembles

post-conflict peacebuilding. It is composed of three different elements – development, governance and security (24) – and draws upon ‘integrated security, governance and development efforts to secure a political settlement’ (xii). This inclusive and wide-ranging framework also stretches to encompass the peacebuilding and statebuilding agendas (110). The conceptual foundations of stabilisation frameworks are set out in more depth when the document refers to nine core security principles (xvi). These principles reassert the centrality of politics, underline the need to focus upon the local level of governance and further underline the centrality of close co-operation and alignment. At the level of logistics, stabilisation interventions are characterised by close co-operation and an integrated, flexible and aligned response framework.

## Democracy

*The UK Government’s Approach to Stabilisation* (2014) sets out a general framework which both identifies the underlying causes of violent conflict and also highlights the means through which violent conflict can be most effectively addressed. In operating within this framework, stabilisation actors direct their efforts towards reconciling ‘underlying incompatibilities’ (1). The smoothing out of contradictions, the amelioration of tensions and the reconciliation of opposites, each point reiterates that we are concerned with a liberal object of reference.

The document affirms that the political settlement will play a central role in reconciling these ‘incompatible’ elements. *The UK Government’s Approach to Stabilisation* highlights the central role that institutions will make in this respect, enabling the management and mediation of deeply rooted contradictions (2014, 1, 2). In other instances, *Security and Stabilisation* outlines a political approach to security, providing a population-centred approach and emphasising the centrality of host-nation governance. Both points of emphasis are consistent with DfID’s general efforts to establish a political approach to conflict engagement and more ‘inclusive’ systems of political governance (MoD 2009, 110).

This approach establishes that democratisation will enable stabilisation actors to engage with the underlying causes of violence, thus ensuring that their interventions do not reproduce the causes of violence in subsequent effect

(Stabilisation Unit 2010, 5, 7). Stabilisation interventions are addressed to the political roots of violent conflict (2010, 7; 2009, 13, 14) and ultimately aspire to the establishment of a political settlement that combines formal and informal attributes (2014, 1; 2009, 110). In anticipating a broad framework of democratic engagement, *The UK Government's Approach to Stabilisation* suggests that economic power should be approached and conceived of as an attribute of political power (2014, 2).

This broadened framework of democratic engagement is evidenced within a more sustained engagement with the 'informal' and 'social'. *Security and Stabilisation* emphasises the importance of social interactions, when it recognises 'the importance of the relationship between the host government, competing elites and the local population' (2009, 26). This preoccupation with the 'social' can be traced back to the integration of democracy and development discourses. The convergence of the two shifts the reader's attention away from a narrow fixation upon formal political rights and instead establishes the basis for a 'broader' engagement with economic and social reference points (2009, 110).

This broadening effect is an important accompaniment of complementarity. As stabilisation actors come to perceive the ways in which democracy, development and security are interrelated, they will advance towards a broader understanding of each component part. This feature was clearly evidenced in each stabilisation document, being most vividly illustrated in the proposition that security can only be completely perceived through the lens of political governance.

Broadening is perfectly embodied and encapsulated in the term 'political settlement'. A closer engagement with the stabilisation documents reveals that this term incorporates economic, political and social dimensions, incorporating each element into a sophisticated and multi-dimensional analysis of (in)security. 'Security' is not imposed by force but instead originates within more consensual tools and techniques. Even here there is an implicitly coercive subtext, as evidenced within the proposition that external influence should work to create 'space for internal actors to reach a political settlement' (Stabilisation Unit 2014, 3). Again, it is reiterated that it is only through external mediation that internal agency is enabled and put into effect.

This serves to reiterate that democratic engagement is not concerned with simply reproducing the perspectives of local actors. On the contrary, there is a clear intention to bring about a fundamental transformation. This is a paradox that is deeply rooted within liberal peacebuilding: it is simultaneously committed to the elevation and fundamental transformation of the local. Accordingly, it is well-established that 'local level stabilisation should be aimed at changing the perceptions, relationships and behaviours of local politically significant actors and groups' (Stabilisation Unit 2010, 11).

In *Security and Stabilisation* this aspect is brought out more completely when local-level engagement is reshaped and adapted as a tactic of counter-insurgency which enables stabilisation actors to shape, secure, hold and develop. Democratic engagement, as part of an 'integrated theatre plan' should therefore aspire to 'influence the decisive groups in order to enable a political settlement' (2009, 168). Democratic engagement is therefore strategized, functioning as part of a wider project that attempts to bring about change at the local level (2009, 126, 168). Although the vernacular of 'empowering' and 'enabling' presents this agency as 'local' (2009, 193), its ultimate exteriority is quite transparent.

Closer inspection therefore reveals that the external is privileged. It is external actors that identify the basis of the political settlement and work to establish the space within which this settlement can become established (2014, 5). In certain instances, it is local actors that are cast in a supportive role (2009, 115). *Security and Stabilisation* makes this quite clear when it observes that 'political analysis may help to identify the elites who should be empowered and those which not' (2009, 137, 193). This clearly corresponds to Richmond's and MacGinty's stated concern with the 'instrumental use of the local' (2013, 771)

The theme of coercion is brought out in even clearer detail when *The UK Government's Approach to Stabilisation* refers to the domestic 'population' (2014, 9) before observing that '[security] forces should have a deep cultural understanding of the local population, and will need to build robust working relationships with them' (2009, 178). The word 'population' is significant because it suggests a predilection to approach the domestic context from outside (2009, 27, 60) and to conceive it as a totality. It possesses few, if any,

of the connotations that might otherwise be attributed to the 'contextual', 'local' or 'social'.

It also ascribes a clear passivity to the local population, evoking a clear sense of administrative, and possibly even colonial, oversight. This brings to mind Richmond's and MacGinty's observation that contemporary engagements with the local come laden with unfortunate colonial antecedents (2013, 771).

*Security and Stabilisation* illustrates this when it observes that external actors 'need to carry [the local population] with us' (2009, xv, 115). Here it is noticeable that the domestic population is not possessed of agency, but is instead swept away and carried forth with the tide. Jabri concisely summarises the essential dynamic when she relates a 'clear sense in which practices are geared to making full use of local actors, their knowledge of their own conditions and their effectiveness as recipients of peacebuilding support' (2013, 13).

As a consequence of these innovations, the domestic context is transformed from the subject to the object of intervention. It is the external guarantors of stabilisation who are to be endowed with agency, a point which is explicitly made when it is asserted that '[t]he population will need to be turned away from their dependence on adversarial hostile and belligerent forces by fracturing these groups and their linkages to the population' (2009, 137). Coercion presents itself in its full immediacy, assuming form in the level of prescription ('the population will need to be turned away'), pejorative overtones ('dependence on adversarial hostile and belligerent forces') and open celebration of punitive actions ('fracturing these groups').

These accounts attribute a clear pre-eminence to external influence, ascribing it a formative and even determining role. However, this general characterisation is complicated when *The UK Government's Approach to Stabilisation* proposes that it is the *withdrawal* of external influence which will enable an endogenous and self-sustaining democratic process to emerge. This absenting will create the domestic space within which local actors can 'recalibrate the balance of power' (2014, 11). *Responding to Stabilisation Challenges* makes the same point, albeit in a different manner, when it asserts the need to shift responsibility to local actors at as early a stage as possible (2010, 25).

In *Responding to Stabilisation Challenges* the convergence of democracy promotion and development produces the understanding that local communities should play an active and important role within service delivery. This document notes that: 'Community engagement means the capacity to communicate with communities, establish the services and opportunities they need to achieve stability and then provide the framework in which they can build those services and opportunities (2010, 15).' In this instance, it is functional concerns which are pre-eminent, a point which is reiterated when democratic engagement is presented as a basis for 'effective stabilisation support' (2010, 15), establishing a means through which external actors can 'investigate local communities' priorities about what they need, what works, what doesn't work and why' (2010, 24).

The document evidences a subtle orientation towards a policy agenda, with local 'demand' producing functional outputs. Through a more sustained engagement at the local level, stabilisation actors will therefore be able to 'identify and support local solutions for stability, implement effective stabilisation support and understand whether stability is improving in the eyes of the population' (2010, 15). Improved service provision that is aligned with the needs of the local community is anticipated within improved forms of analysis, communication and implementation.

Community engagement is similarly redefined with reference to the imperative of enhanced functional capacities. *Responding to Stabilisation Challenges* observes that: 'community engagement [requires] that civilian and military actors engage with communities and triangulate analysis to inform planning and programming' (2010, 15). The precise terminology used here – 'triangulate', 'planning', 'programming' – is strikingly technocratic in form. The value of democratic engagement therefore derives from the fact that it improves information feedback, heightens responsiveness ('local knowledge and relationships [are] pivotal to timely decision-making at the tactical level' (2009, 160)) and aligns the overall intervention with local conditions. In each of these respects, '[t]he governing imperative of peacebuilding undermines the political' (Jabri 2013, 15).

Through a more sustained democratic engagement, stabilisation actors can move towards an improved 'situational understanding' (2010, 15) and align their interventions with local needs and requirements. The technocratic undertones are made explicit within allusions to 'triangulation', 'analysis', 'planning' and 'programming'. In operating within this framework, democratic engagement become focused in upon very precise end objectives, such as the heightened accountability of the security services (2010, 2, 10; 2014, 2). While this is undoubtedly an important undertaking in itself, it is far from clear how it can address the 'deep-rooted, complex political problems that cause conflict and insecurity' (2010, 3).

The three stabilisation documents, in rendering the convergence of democracy and security, present the tools and techniques of democratic engagement as means through which 'battle' can be waged. In this form, democratic engagement is almost indistinguishable from pacification. This is made clear when *Security and Stabilisation* observes that: 'Identifying the decisive groups and then persuading them to support the government through focused campaigns may be more effective than killing and capturing adversaries' (2009, 136). This is redolent of what Jabri has previously referred to as a 'policing rationality' (2013, 10). It is striking, and more than a little sobering, to reflect upon how far this has taken from our initial exploration of positive peace.

It is particularly telling that stabilisation doctrine casts domestic populations as passive recipients. 'Empowered' domestic populations do not change their own material circumstances; rather, it is incumbent upon external agencies to lead the domestic population away from temptation and in the direction of salvation, an imperative that takes on ecclesiastical overtones. In this regard, it is instructive to reflect that the word 'dependence' carries a clear pejorative, exposing a clear moral failing upon the part of the stabilisation subject. Over time, these failings have become deeply entrenched, making it incumbent upon external actors to break the binds that chain the domestic population to their own deficiencies and assorted 'spoilers'. However, this brave and moral undertaking is substantially complicated by the fact that the dividing lines between the two have become blurred and indistinct – at times, it is difficult to see where the enemy ends and the population begins. This is a point

which *Security and Stabilisation* explicitly makes when it observes that the adversary is frequently only engaged *through* the local population (2009, 197). Far from being the foundation-stone of emancipation and transformation, the local has now become an object that elicits distrust and consternation.

It is equally significant that *Security and Stabilisation* asserts the importance of British interests and priorities ('the purpose of UK military participation in security and stabilisation is the achievement of the desired UK political aim' (2009, 15, 59). In the deepening and contextuality chapters, external actors took on an almost neutral form, appearing as a background presence whose influence upon the domestic context was understated and at times imperceptible. Stabilisation doctrine has however achieved a profound inversion, coming to conceive local actors in an assistive, ancillary or secondary role. In this respect it is instructive that it is their support, as opposed to direct participation, that is solicited and incorporated into stabilisation strategies (2009, 115). In reiterating a deeply ingrained exteriority, *Security and Stabilisation* observes that 'influence is the overarching effect that all the elements of a stabilisation plan will seek to achieve' (2009, 56).

In this respect, it is important to note that democratic participation is most frequently conceived as a means through which surveillance and oversight can be refined. Democratic participation has become narrowed in upon a very precise or exact purpose. *Security and Stabilisation* reiterates this when it conceives the domestic population as a 'rich source of intelligence' (2009, 115). The population has now become an input into a bureaucratic process, whose contribution will diminish the 'uncertainties' associated 'with focused intelligence gathering and analysis' (2009, 60). We appear to be confronted by an instance in which 'the local is securitised and modernised in Western liberal and neoliberal terms' (Richmond and MacGinty 2013, 776). This is not a minor footnote to a more substantial adjustment; rather, as *Security and Stabilisation* observes, it represents a qualitative shift within the overarching rationale of intelligence gathering (2009, 222, 223).

In detailing the intelligence gathering process, *Security and Stabilisation* asserts that '[c]ommanders should instil [in their intelligence teams] this idea of building the intelligence picture from the bottom-up' (2009, 115). Democratic engagement is viewed as a means that enables intelligence agencies to



penetrate domestic host societies and extract information that can be applied in the course of stabilisation interventions. We are reminded that '[e]ffective intelligence gathering is proactive, aggressive and bottom-up in nature' (2009, 60).

In engaging with the encounter between democracy and security I have sought to demonstrate how democratic engagement incorporates local actors and agencies into stabilisation frameworks. I have sought to demonstrate how this integration of the two discursive components has been accompanied by various tensions and contradictions or, in the words of Richmond, various 'moments of exclusion' (2011, 9). I sought to demonstrate how the three key stabilisation documents reproduced a clear sense of exteriority, sometimes in direct opposition to a persistent commitment to local-level engagement. The internal-external and technical-political tensions that I encountered in the Contextuality chapter were similarly reproduced within these stabilisation documents.

In engaging with the securitisation of local agency, I noted how local participation became an essential component within counter-insurgency. In contrast to the proposition of a democratic broadening, I encountered a subtle reformulation, in which the agency of local actors became aligned with a broader counter-insurgency strategy. I suggested that the coercive undertones, which had been understated and even occluded in earlier chapters, had now become pronounced. The fact that stabilisation is ultimately directed towards the realisation of British interests was, for example, quite clearly and openly acknowledged. Stabilisation discourse, I suggested, lacked the nuances and subtleties that had been encountered in the deepening and contextuality chapters.

## **Development**

*Responding to Stabilisation Challenges* (2010) begins by observing that stabilisation interventions should be addressed to the underlying 'drivers' of conflict. The word 'driver' reflects a more nuanced understanding, in which conflict dynamics are no longer reducible to simplistic cause-effect relations. Underdevelopment, for instance, is no longer crudely interpreted as a 'cause' of conflict; rather it is instead – in a far more satisfactory manner – linked into a

wider set of interlocking and interconnecting factors (2009, 30). *Responding to Stabilisation Challenges* therefore establishes a reciprocal interplay which conjoins politics and development (2010, 7).

The concept of 'driver' is therefore associated with a heightened degree of complexity, uncertainty and contingency and, by virtue of each of these features, does not anticipate a direct end product. By virtue of the fact that drivers are singular to each society, stabilisation insights can only be generalised across different contexts with extreme caution. However, *Security and Stabilisation* does acknowledge that '[t]here are some generic tenets which underpin success' (2009, 24). Again, this brings us back to the specific-general/internal-external tension that reoccurred over the course of preceding chapters.

*Security and Stabilisation* establishes that 'development initiatives, where possible, should be designed directly to confront the economic and political drivers of conflict' (2009, 105; also see 2014, 5). Development is therefore an adaptable and flexible tool that can be applied to the underlying drivers of instability and violent conflict (2009, 105; 2014, 5). Under less happy circumstances, the reverse applies – developmental shortcomings can obstruct or undermine stabilisation objectives.

By virtue of these pronounced interlinkages, democracy promotion, development and security can be approached within a common framework of reference (2014, 9). *Security and Stabilisation* further reiterates that security is important because it 'stimulat[es] economic activity and suppor[ts] longer-term development and governance reform' (2009, 79). Both the statebuilding and development agendas further underline this interconnectedness – the reform of state institutions, appropriate practices of governance and integration into global economic processes all converge upon single points (2009, 9).

Institutions are a particular fixation, representing a point of convergence for a range of disparate concerns and preoccupations. At a thematic level, they bring together democracy and development, establishing the basis for a multi-dimensional agenda focused upon accountability, legitimacy and responsiveness which is directed towards the mitigation and management of social conflict (2014, 1). Fully functional institutions, both formal and informal,

integrate the state into society, establishing the basis for a more stable, secure and sustainable political settlement (2009, 62; 2014, 1).

One of the most noticeable features of the given stabilisation documents is that there is a much less pronounced emphasis upon human needs. Needs, it will be recalled, were an essential accompaniment to human development and human security. However, they are conspicuous by their absence from *Responding to Stabilisation Challenges*; instead, the locus of attention has instead shifted towards the ‘multiple human interests’ which guide stabilisation interventions. ‘Interest’ is a particularly important signifier because it appears to abruptly displace human-centred frameworks, instead elevating a set of rationalised and utility-maximising reference points in their place. Invocations of ‘stakeholders’ (2009, 60; 2010, 15) are significant for precisely the same reason.

This functionalist ethos is similarly reproduced in the discussion of statebuilding, with development being presented as the basis of the domestic government’s authority. *Security and Stabilisation* suggests that ‘all actions [should be] linked to national priorities, programmes and structures’ (2009, 24). National ‘ownership’ of the development agenda is particularly important because it strengthens and legitimises the domestic state. This establishes the basis for heightened public interaction with the state, thus further consolidating the domestic political settlement. Optimised governance presents a circle, with each component interlocking and interacting.

*Security and Stabilisation* reiterates this feature when it emphasises that ‘[t]he host nation will need to demonstrate that they can deliver security, justice, governance and economic prosperity more effectively than their adversaries’ (2009, 127). The integration of democracy, development and security originates a series of tactics that can be applied as part of a more general counter-insurgency strategy. At this point we are reminded of Richmond and MacGinty’s allusion to instances in which ‘strategic interests and securitisation [have] seeped carelessly into peacebuilding and development’ (2013, 777-778).

It is similarly noticeable how ‘informal’ and ‘social’ reference points (2009, 105) converge back on the statebuilding and ‘good governance’ agendas. This is one illustration of a more general trend towards standardisation within the peacebuilding field (Richmond and MacGinty 2013,

777), a trend which has already been extensively engaged in the deepening and contextuality chapters. Just as in my discussion of contextuality, I argue that the integration of democracy, development and security should be conceived and understood in relation to a wider background of functionality. State-societal relations, to take one example, were no longer conceived as a site of alterity, but instead served to reproduced generic models and templates.

While development theory and practice encompasses a wide range of reference points, I encountered a clear convergence upon a very precise reform of agenda which takes improved state functionality, domestic ownership (of the development agenda and enhanced state-societal relations as its key preoccupations. Each component feeds into a multi-dimensional and integrated counter-insurgency strategy. This incorporation, I suggested, has not been without concomitant contradictions, divergences and tensions.

## Security

*Security and Stabilisation* sets out the basic components of stabilisation doctrine when it references ‘three broad, overlapping areas of progress that underpin successful stabilisation efforts: security, governance and development’ (2009, 24). This document suggests that security is a foundation which will underpin further progress (2009, 20; 2014, 10), alternately presenting it as a condition or enabling influence (2014, 7). *The UK Government’s Approach to Stabilisation* further reiterates this point when it observes that ‘[s]ecurity is essential to create a conducive environment for non-violent political processes’ (2014, 9).

This contribution again reminds us that stabilisation is grounded within a very specific understanding of security. It does not aspire to the removal of contradiction, conflict or tension. Rather, it aspires to the establishment of institutions through which they can be more effectively managed. The allusion to ‘non-violent political processes’ is a synonym for institutions that can manage and channel conflict. In instances where ‘non-violent fora’ (2014, 7) break down, tensions will ensue and the likelihood of violent conflict will increase. This acknowledgement of the institutional dimension is consistent with a ‘broadened’ framework of security analysis. As *Security and Stabilisation* explains: ‘A sense of security cannot be maintained by military action alone since it is bound into

the wider concept of human security and improving governance' (2009, 204). Frameworks of 'human security' and 'governance' are therefore presented as force maximisers, which will augment existing capacities and capabilities. In engaging with these broader agenda, security actors are guided by the insight that it is 'the delivery of focused, comprehensive effect, not purely military effect, which will overwhelm adversaries' (2009, xiii). The challenges of security therefore necessitate a broad-ranging and integrated approach which engages across 'security, development and governance lines of operation' (2009, 2).

*Security and Stabilisation* further illustrates how governance can be linked into security when it observes that 'security is usually conditional on a degree of popular consent' (2009, 87). 'Consent' contrasts with 'empowerment' and 'participation' because it implies a much more limited or passive form of democratic engagement. It also suggests that social actors are to acquiesce to measures that have been largely predetermined or foregrounded in advance.

While the rationale of democratic participation is relatively delimited, the range of participants is somewhat wider. To this extent, all three of the key documents converge upon the proposition that both formal and informal institutions can help to manage and mediate social tensions. In the self-understanding that *Security and Stabilisation* advances, this insight derives from a more advanced analysis of (in)security. It reflects that '[t]he military provides only part of the solution to a complex, primarily political problem' (2009, 21). The words 'complex' and 'primarily political' further distance the document from a technocratic framework, situating it firmly within a political field of analysis.

In further analysis of this point, the same document also remarks that '[s]ecurity progress should not just be seen as a sequential series of steps into whose footprints civil actors can move' (2009, 56). By implication, the text posits that it is inherently flawed to speak as though security corresponds to linear progression and precise graduations. Instead, security actors must learn to engage with contingency, flux and fluidity. They must come to think and act within a framework of analysis that systematically engages with the economic, political and social dimensions of conflict (2009, 56). *Security and Stabilisation*, in engaging this interrelation in more depth, asserts that '[t]he stability of the

state depends on the manner in which [security, development and governance] interact and are mutually reinforcing' (2009, 5).

Stabilisation interventions should therefore work in a fluid and integrated manner, and engage not only with specific challenges, but also with the points at which they intersect and overlap. Stabilisation actors operate in a highly uncertain environment, in which the exertion of influence at any one point will produce a whole range of subsequent effects. Degradation in one respect can contribute to 'an erosion of the others' (2009, 7).

In working within this framework of reference, *The UK Government's Approach to Stabilisation* expands upon the interaction between politics and security in some detail (2014, 7). It observes that the convergence of the democracy and security agendas has resulted in a heightened emphasis upon open and accountable security services (2009, 90; 2014, 7). However, accountability is not privileged in and of itself – rather, its value is instead understood to derive from the range of efficiency benefits that it produces (2010, 24). This point is clearly addressed by the fact that *Responding to Stabilisation Challenges* makes accountability a condition of efficiency (2010, 24).

In engaging with each of the stabilisation texts, we also encounter a repeated assertion of the proposition that security is not a technical concern that can be guaranteed through appropriate adjustments and amendments within the established terms of reference. *Security and Stabilisation* outlines the range of activities that are grouped under the Demobilisation, Disarmament and Reintegration (DDR) rubric before asserting that it is not a technical framework of reference. In further reiterating this point, it observes that 'DDR is not just a technical, military activity, but a political process with economic and social consequences' (2009, 93).

Significantly, *Security and Stabilisation* attributes the emergence of stabilisation frameworks to this paradigm shift. This is shown in its allusion to 'wider stabilisation activities that have gone beyond the delivery of security' (2009, 20). Stabilisation, in this understanding, represents a hugely significant shift within the conceptualisation and theorisation of security.

Here it is clearly reiterated that security cannot be reduced to more effective forms of technocratic management and mediation. However, upon

closer reflection, this 'political' framework rests upon a certain ambiguity, and to this extent, 'political' reference points become intelligible in their functional relation: the agency of informal actors is considered in relation to a series of policy outputs (2010, 23, 110). To an equivalent extent, the encounter between democracy and security does not substantially reduce or qualify external biases or distortions. This point is explicitly reasserted when it is observed that 'military operations need to focus upon the population in order to ensure human and physical security' (2009, 173). The recurrence of the word 'population' again reiterates that we are concerned with an externalised framework which is predisposed to approach its referent object from without. Although the human security framework suggests that human needs and priorities are the preponderant preoccupation, a closer analysis suggests that human security is only ensured through interventions that act *upon* the given population. This point is firmly reiterated when the need to 're-establish and maintain control of key populations' (2009, 199) is again (re)asserted.

## Conclusion

This chapter has focused upon the points at which discourses of democracy, development and security encounter each other. In engaging at each of the interrelated points I have worked within the framework of complementarity, which is premised upon the understanding that the integration and alignment of each constitutive element will produce reinforcing effects and the amelioration of deeply rooted contradictions and tensions. In engaging with the broad theme of stabilisation, I sought to establish precisely how each of the constitutive elements of post-conflict peacebuilding was textually related, aligned and reconciled.

After engaging with the question of how integration was achieved, my analysis frequently reiterated that the respective components were aligned in ways that were conflictual or contradictory. As with both the chapters on deepening and contextuality, I noted a pervasive functionalism. In this instance, however, this feature was more abrupt and was therefore less underpinned by subtle nuances, mitigations or qualifications. Exteriority, the predisposition to approach peacebuilding questions from an external perspective, to take one

example, was clearly held as a central corollary and implication of the given stabilisation documents.

I suggested that the word ‘population’ perfectly embodied this attribute. The word implies a malleable form which can be reformulated and adapted through external intervention. At times, I suggested, these external interventions assumed coercive overtones. The perceptions, relations and behaviours of domestic actors became, as a consequence, the object of external mediation and oversight. Although reforms and initiatives were enacted at the domestic level, their impetus and momentum ultimately derived from external sources. The word ‘population’ also implies a certain objectification or passivity. Far from rendering the active subject of peacebuilding theory, stabilisation instead seeks the ‘consent’ of a depoliticised and passive population, whose acquiescence is an invaluable resource within the ‘politico-strategic’ struggle.

The three key documents evidenced a residual sense that local agency should be incorporated into stabilisation frameworks. Each one furthers the impression of a political framework of reference which is predicated upon a ‘deepened’ understanding of democratic engagement. In engaging at all three points, we repeatedly encountered the assertion that democracy is more than a formal means of decision-making or a mechanism of optimal service delivery. However, upon a closer engagement with the three texts we encounter a negotiation of political and technocratic reference points. The tensions between these two points are not overcome but are instead discursively qualified, mitigated and managed.

In the initial stages of this chapter I noted that complementarity corresponds to the general proposition that one of the constitutive components of post-conflict peacebuilding is essentially reinforcing: democracy feeds into development which in turn feeds into security. Each element is intelligible in its mutual relation and interaction. My analysis has instead suggested a slightly different order of discourse, in which democracy and development are refracted through the lens of security. In engaging with the three key texts I observed how local agency and development become securitised, that is, incorporated into a wider framework of reference. This closely corresponds to Richmond’s allusion to instances in which empowerment and emancipation are ‘carried out in the shadow of security’ (Richmond 2011, 30). Upon engaging with the reproduction



of complementarity within the three given texts, I would be predisposed to suggest a pervasive securitisation, in which democracy and development are reconfigured as 'technologies of security' and recast as means through which securitising agendas are discursively and materially (re) produced.

## Chapter Seven

### Conclusion

#### Introduction

This thesis has sought to engage and resolve the question of how the comprehensive approach has enabled the British government to overcome the contradictions and tensions of liberal peacebuilding. I defined the comprehensive approach as a means through which a range of actors – international, regional and state – could reconcile the tensions of liberal peacebuilding and work towards a broadened framework of reference.

In looking to engage with this agenda of comprehensiveness in more depth and detail, I first identified three separate dimensions of the comprehensive approach: deepening, contextuality and complementarity. My analysis did not question whether these three dimensions were evidenced within texts; rather, it sought to identify how they were reproduced and to what extent this reproduction succeeded in overcoming the three key tensions of liberal peacebuilding.

The integration of liberal peacebuilding discourse, I argued, partially overcomes or mitigates the tensions of liberal peacebuilding. The three different dimensions of the comprehensive approach were clearly identified and traced within the policy documents; however, their form did not clearly correspond to initial expectations. Rather, I encountered the continual occurrence and iteration of certain tensions and contradictions. Upon engaging with the policy documents I encountered an oscillation between each of these respective points: the technical and political, the internal and external. Ultimately, the texts did not produce final closure or reconciliation, but instead reconfigured or realigned pervasive tensions and contradictions.

In direct opposition to the ostensible rationale of policy documents, I did not therefore read them as the unfolding of policy knowledge or as an incremental progression towards a more complete reconciliation of theory and practice. I instead suggested that they should be encountered as a series of discursive manoeuvres which subtly qualify, mitigate or understate underlying tensions. Deepening, contextuality and complementarity were all evidenced, but in forms which clearly diverged from their initial iteration.

In engaging with the proposition that liberal peacebuilding had advanced beyond technocratic points of reference, for instance, I sought to highlight the recurrence and reiteration of ‘surpassed’ reference points. As one illustration, civil society engagement became articulated within a technical vernacular, being directed towards the achievement of optimal policy outputs. Similarly, in advancing the claim that interventions were grounded within the local context, policy documents would frequently orientate back towards general or external reference points, often doing so in ways that were subtle, understated or occluded. From my perspective, this (re)confirmed the centrality of a critical reading that would seek to engage resultant tensions in their true meaning and significance.

In this chapter I will develop this critical contribution by returning to material that was initially engaged in both the Literature Review and Theory chapters. I do so in the belief that these contributions can help to bring out important aspects of my empirical findings by situating them within a wider field of critical analysis.

I will initially return to the three dimensions of the comprehensive approach. In engaging with each of the three empirical chapters, I will summarise key research findings and observations. In engaging at each point, I also attempt to incorporate contributions to the literature in order to clarify key points and link the discussion back to themes that have already been engaged. I will then set out my research contribution. I understand my contribution to be situated within a wider set of contributions. This requires me to answer a number of questions: How has it filled existing gaps in the literature? What points has it clarified? How does it interact with other contributions to the research field?

Finally, the further research sub-section initially engages with the limitations of my research – the points of potential engagement that, for a variety of reasons, it has been unable to engage in sufficient depth or detail. In highlights points of oversight or omission, it anticipates the outlines of future research.

## **Deepening, Contextuality and Complementarity: Three Dimensions of the Comprehensive Approach**

The comprehensive approach has three separate dimensions: deepening, contextuality and complementarity. Each dimension is linked into an associated specific proposition. Deepening originates within the proposition that peacebuilding actors have come to acknowledge the inherent limitations and perversities of 'top-down', 'technocratic' or 'managerial' frameworks of engagement. This has resulted in a shift towards a 'deeper' or more substantive model of democracy promotion. Contextuality can be traced back to the proposition that practitioners have come to acknowledge the limitations and constraints of 'top-down' forms of managerialism. Through learning the lessons of past failure, peacebuilding actors have internalised the axiom that peacebuilding interventions should be contextually rooted within societal institutions, practices, structures and capacities. Finally, complementarity can be traced back to the proposition that internal tensions have acted to the detriment of previous peacebuilding interventions. In acknowledging the potential for each peacebuilding component to conflict, peacebuilding actors have actively strived to balance democracy, development and security within their peacebuilding strategies and approaches.

Deepening originates within the assumption that peacebuilding actors have 'learned' the deficiencies of 'minimalist' (Bermeo 2003, 153-154) or 'circumscribed' (Labonte 2003, 262) frameworks of democracy promotion. While these frameworks have not been entirely disposed with, they have been subordinated to a more ambitious agenda focused upon social transformation.

In slightly different terms, we might speak of a shift of emphasis that has re-orientated from a formal to a substantive model of democracy promotion. This clearly recalls Pouligny's suggestion that 'politics and statehood must be understood in their substantial aspects, their diverse conceptions and properties, and not only in their formal appearances' (2005, 505). In operationalising the insight that the formal political process provides a very limited basis of engagement (DfID 2006, 6, 68), peacebuilding actors have proactively committed to a deepened democratic agenda (Newman 2009, 2010; Richmond 2005).

This shift further embeds the sense that peacebuilding is a linear progression, continually striving towards enhanced methods of conflict engagement and intervention. Liberal peacebuilding is in perpetual motion, continually adapting, adjusting and realigning. This feature is deeply rooted, presenting itself as an intrinsic attribute. Liberal peacebuilding proceeds, in anticipation of a deepened democratic commitment, a more sustained engagement of context and a heightened integration of constitutive elements.

My reading of key policy documents instead sought to 'vulgarise' these linear progressions, indicating an abrupt reversion to 'surpassed' reference points. I continually returned to a sense of contradiction, of recurrent tension. To take one example: deepening became tied up with state functionality (Torres and Anderson 2004, 9; DfID 2006, 11, 19), and therefore part of a wider framework of reference. Claire Barnes encapsulates this development when she refers to 'participation in policy processes' (2009, 6). Whereas the initial terms of deepening had corresponded to emancipation and social transformation, the focus upon policy outcomes ultimately returns the discussion to what Barnes describes as a 'discourse of functionality' (2009, 3, 11). In being refracted through this discourse, deepening becomes a means through which improved levels of policy performance can be achieved. It ultimately becomes comprehensible in its relation to, and implications for, this reform agenda.

In being refracted through this lens, democratic deepening no longer corresponded to a sense of alterity or subversion; on the contrary, it instead became a means through which general neo-liberal imperatives such as efficiency and functionality were embedded and circulated: civil society engagement, to take another example, became focused in upon a very specific set of functional outputs. The terms of discourse became noticeably more general and homogenised in the process. The freedom of the domestic subject became exercised in a way which further reinforced the overarching structure of neo-liberal governance, recalling Foucault's allusion to the 'considerable extension of procedures of control, constraint, and coercion which are something like the counterpart and counterweight of different freedoms' (2010, 67). To put it differently, heightened participation within this framework does not mitigate or remove control; rather, it further intensifies the reach and disciplinary

scope of neo-liberal governance. This recalls Richmond's previous allusion to 'agencies of both emancipatory and repressive character' (Richmond 2010, 200).

Upon engaging with other policy documents, I encountered further instances in which emancipation or transformation became discursively 'bounded', being situated within a wider field of reference. My discussion of empowerment, in direct opposition to the proposition that 'there is no advance blueprint' (OECD 1997b), found that the empowerment of the domestic subject was frequently centred in upon a clearly defined set of expectations. In opposition to open-ended frameworks of democratic engagement, such as Lederach's 'process structure' (1997, 84) and de Guevara's 'process-orientated' (2010) model of state formation, 'social' engagement instead became fixated upon a very precise and exact set of 'core functions', with improved capability, accountability and responsiveness being openly celebrated and elevated as core priorities (CAR) (DfID 2001, 11; DfID 2006, 11). Participation, empowerment and 'social' engagement therefore became, through a subtle adaptation, reconfigured as a set of inputs. This brought to mind Pouligny's depiction of a 'fundamental ambiguity' in which civil society engagement became reduced to 'to highly technical dimensions, depriving it of all political substance' (2005, 505).

*Governance, Development and Democratic Politics: DfID's Work in Developing More Effective States* similarly situates social engagement in relation to statebuilding processes. In further reiterating this point, it asserts that 'it is this wider political economy of institutions that determines state effectiveness' (2006, 6; Whaites 2008, 11). The preoccupation with efficiency ultimately returns the reader to a very general level of discussion. Allusions to the 'quality' of state–societal relations, to take one example, are clearly contingent upon a general measurement or standard against which the specific instance can be measured. This feature is also put into effect when the active incorporation of informal institutions into governance networks is presented as a means through which a set of positive general effects, such as heightened accountability, transparency or state functionality, can be concretely realised. This complex hybridisation recalls Chandler's previous allusion to instances in

which emancipatory points of reference such as ‘empowerment’ become subsumed within a technocratic vernacular (2006, 20-21, 64).

As a direct consequence, the agency of domestic actors becomes functionalised or instrumentalised. Improved accountability, transparency and openness are the beneficial by-products derived from this rationalised politics. Devoid of any contingency or unpredictability, the political agency of domestic actors instead becomes reconfigured and recapitulated as a technique of good governance. The empowerment of local actors does not anticipate alterity or variation, but rather reproduces the dimensions of the overarching governance framework. Under these circumstances, ‘every empowerment of individual subjects [becomes] matched by the growth of subjectifying capacities of government’ (Simons 1995, 47, 50).

The tension between the technocratic and political is overcome by the formation of these hybrid forms, which fuse the two dimensions in ways that internalise the essential tension. The political no longer appears as the point at which the technical is denied or refused, rather it instead provides the means through which it is reproduced and circulated. Deepening therefore serves to further embed ‘sound policies’ (DfID 2007, 18) and entrench a ‘dominant set of policy aspirations’ (Torres and Anderson 2004, 10). Fraser (2005) notes this shift in his previous discussion of poverty reduction strategies, which he presents as a mechanism that integrates local actors into external frameworks of governance. Although the vernacular of empowerment and participation implies variation and heterogeneity, it would be more appropriate to speak of variation within clearly established limits (Fritz and Menocal 2007, 39). Peacebuilding documents frequently push against the outer boundaries of ‘peace-as-governance’ (Richmond 2009, 57; 2011, 12), but ultimately slip back into its comforting embrace.

My initial discussion of contextuality highlighted a reform agenda focused upon the specific, the local and the contextual (Call and Cook 2003, 238; Call and Cousens 2008, 15). In rejecting universalisation or generalisation, the discourse of contextuality draws strongly upon the ‘social’ (Migdal 2001; Lemay-Hebert 2009). Precisely because the ‘social’ varies across and between each individual context (‘indigenous mechanisms for the creation of [democratic governance] may vary from one society to another and may not coincide with

the precise institutional forms of Western democracies' (Malloch Brown 2003, 145)), contextuality is closely associated with heightened heterogeneity and variation (DfID 2006, 3, 13, 20). It establishes the basis for a 'sociologically or anthropologically orientated approach [that] emphasise[s] the particularities of each state and its societal context' (Lemay-Hebert 2009, 28; also see Doornbos 2002).

In each of these contributions, context appears as an imperative, a form to be concretely realised and manifested. Thus, I sought in my analysis to disassemble context, and to break it down into its constitutive parts. This analysis was very similar to my engagement with deepening: I critically engaged with this general proposition of contextuality in order to illustrate how it was linked back into externalised and generic frameworks of reference. In engaging with *Governance, Development and Democratic Politics*, for instance, I noted a persistent tendency to refer back to an agenda focused upon 'growth, service delivery and the environment' (DfID 2006, 49). Rather than imposing limitations or constraints upon these general points of reference, 'context' more frequently came to serve as a means through which it was reproduced; as with deepening, the active involvement of informal institutions became reconceived as a means through which transparency and accountability could be realised or reinforced (2010, 9, 22, 45).

In this instance, context does not provide the a priori foundation of engagement, but is instead subsequently incorporated into a prior reform agenda. This feature is evidenced, for instance, when context is presented as a consideration which external actors should take into account (DfID 2007, 9), being proposed as a unit of analysis to be factored into cost-benefit analyses (DfID 2006, 39). This again presents a clear functionalisation, in which local context is adapted and operationalised by external actors. Context is not denied or restricted, but is instead made to function in a way that reinforces and reproduces wider reform agendas and priorities. *Building Peaceful States and Societies* speaks, in precisely these terms, of a 'virtuous circle', in which interactions between social and political actors produce a range of beneficial effects or outputs (DfID 2010, 7).

Although context is taken as the immediate object of engagement, our attention ultimately flickers back towards a general optimisation of state—



societal relations and state functionality (Torres and Anderson 2004, 9). Again, we are reminded of Oliver Richmond's critical indictment of engagements which seek to homogenise or instrumentalise the local (Richmond 2011, 46). In direct opposition to a context that establishes the basis for 'alterity and difference', this emaciated 'context' instead anticipates a range of normalising and standardising effects (Zanotti 2006; also see MacGinty 2012, 300).

In bringing the internal and external together within a range of hybrid formulations, the documents I examined did not situate the internal and external in diametric opposition. The internal did not appear as a point of limitation, at which external influence was refused or denied; instead it more frequently appeared as a means through which these external dimensions were circulated and embodied. My analysis of contextuality therefore repeatedly sought to overcome the sense of binary opposition and to demonstrate the ways in which the two levels of governance were intertwined and interrelated. The internal was no longer defined in opposition to the external, but was instead constituted through and within it.

Thus, I sought to demonstrate that 'context' is not a pristine essence unstained by external impurities; rather, it is constituted through and within the external. As Jabri observed, 'even where the lens shifts to the local, it is already deeply imbricated with the international' (2013, 11). In similarly emphasising the constitutive dimensions of this relationship, Richmond has similarly spoken of instances in which liberal peacebuilders 'produce political subjects or citizens best suited to fulfil their policies, agendas, interests and ideologies' (2011, 12). The contours and outlines of context are therefore constituted within the interaction between the internal and external.

In seeking to demonstrate this point in more depth and detail, I explained how externalised and generalised reference points repeatedly tended to reoccur within the given policy documents. In discussing *States in Development*, for example, I observed that the document openly speculated, in very general terms, upon whether specific institutional arrangements may be preferable to alternatives (2008, 16). Similarly, the use of 'transferable' terms such as 'development effectiveness' and 'minimal standards' (Torres and Anderson 2004, 3, 5, 9, 12, 13) derives from a 'functional and sometimes technocratic

view of politics that seeks to ‘measure’ the success of political processes in terms of pre-conceived institutional benchmarks’ (Hameiri 2010, 11).

In this respect, contextuality more frequently appears to correspond to a textual negotiation of two separate points. In the first instance, readers are directed towards a set of reference points which are grounded within the local, specific or contextual; in the second instance, they are instead concerned with an overarching ‘discourse of functionality’ (Barnes 2009, 3, 11) which corresponds to ‘effectiveness’, ‘standards’ and ‘quality’ (DfID 2001, 9). Their attention therefore flickers between variation and standardisation, heterogeneity and homogeneity.

This tension is not ultimately overcome or ‘reconciled’. Instead, the reader encounters a perpetual assertion and retraction of transferability, generalisation and standardisation. Appeals to a neo-liberal rationality (as evidenced in references to the ‘quality’ of state–societal relations and ‘effective’ participation) are foregrounded, but are not then pursued to their logical implication or conclusion. Just as deepening rendered a hybridisation of the political and the technical, contextuality provides a hybridisation of the internal and the external.

Finally, I engaged with complementarity, and sought to identify how each of the internal components of post-conflict peacebuilding (democracy, development and security) are integrated in a way that overcomes internal tensions and contradictions. In engaging with a proposition that I had initially explored in the chapter on deepening, I highlighted a clear convergence upon a ‘deepened’ form of democratic engagement. This reiterated that democracy is more than just an instrument of good governance or improved service delivery (MoD 2009, 21, 59–76, 110). The reader nonetheless encounters a reversion or oscillation towards a range of technical reference points (Stabilisation Unit 2010, 15, 24; 2014, 2, 9).

The given stabilisation documents also sought to further the understanding that stabilisation is essentially an endogenous concern, which is guided by local contributions and capacities. In keeping with this general proposition, the document repeatedly asserted that local actors should take the lead in stabilisation interventions (Stabilisation Unit 2010, 25; 2014, 2, 11). However, a closer engagement with the text revealed an essential inversion, in

which local actors were cast in a supportive or assistive role (DfID 2009, 115; Stabilisation Unit 2014, 3, 5). In contrast to my engagement with deepening and contextuality, where external influence was subtle and understated, the stabilisation documents instead presented external influence in a much clearer and less ambiguous form, with local actors instead appearing as objects of stabilisation (MoD 2009, 115, 137).

The interrelation and integration of these three discursive components also clearly diverged from another initial expectation that had been established by complementarity. As one illustration, 'bottom-up' approaches to security do not fundamentally alter or reconfigure the terms within which security is conceptualised and theorised; rather they instead provide an alternative means through which it can be pursued and realised. In corresponding to this outline, democracy and development became 'securitised' when they were refracted through the lens of security.

As a result of this internal realignment, the emancipatory or transformative connotations of a deepened form of democracy become lost. The local, which was previously depicted as the repository of an unrealised potential, is instead cast aside as a site of potential corruption and deviation. *Security and Stabilisation: The Military Contribution* expresses a clear concern that local populations, having been led astray by the malign intentions of various 'spoilers', may be corrupted (MoD 2009, 197). It is therefore incumbent – and here the essential exteriority of stabilisation is again reiterated – to break chains of 'dependence', swiftly curtail potential temptations and ensure that 'appropriate' forms of conduct are upheld (Stabilisation Unit 2010, 1, 10, 11).

In engaging with the textual reproduction of the three dimensions of the comprehensive approach, I am tempted to suggest that complementarity merely makes its ultimate intent and purpose clearer and more explicit; it lacks, to this extent, the nuances and subtleties that characterise its two predecessors. In all three instances, the essential implication of a regulatory or disciplinary framework of reference is nonetheless the same. This regulatory structure, which inculcates 'appropriate' and 'proportionate' practices, does not seek to deny or restrict the agency of the local; rather, it operates through and within it.

## Research Contribution

This research breaks with the assumption that the practice of peacebuilding should be the primary focus of analytical engagement. Instead, I have sought to engage with the discursive structuring and theoretical underpinnings of liberal peacebuilding. This has required me to take a step back, and to critically engage with assumptions that have otherwise been taken for granted, which effectively function as articles of faith. In engaging with deeply embedded and essentially implicit assumptions, I have drawn upon the contributions of Paris (1997), Haugerudbraaten (1998) and Bellamy (2004), each of whom stressed the need for precisely this type of engagement.

The research literature, however, tends to be more narrowly concerned with the question of how peacebuilding is practiced – that is, how it is implemented by specific institutional actors. As each of the preceding contributors observe, this suggests that practice has proceeded in advance of a sustained analysis of underpinning assumptions. As an inherently pragmatic enterprise, peacebuilding has consequently remained under-theorised. My research is valuable because it consciously and deliberately seeks to overcome this particular defect.

In this respect, my research also has implications for the object of my study – namely, the British government. My research questions the assumption that the tensions or contradictions can be overcome within the existing terms of reference; it highlights the fact that established approaches, far from reconciling or overcoming tension, essentially reproduce them. This provides a further reiteration of the need to question underpinning assumptions and to acknowledge the limitations of a problem-solving framework. A critical analysis is required which does not take ‘empowerment’ or ‘participation’ for granted. It is, in these circumstances, necessary to first offer a critical analysis that asks precisely what form of ‘empowerment’ or ‘participation’ is on offer.

My institutional focus upon the British government also provides a significant innovation. Within the research literature, there is a deeply ingrained assumption that the UN, as the institutional actor with primary responsibility for the development of peacebuilding practice, should be the main focus of attention. In accepting this premise, Karen Barnes (2010), Catriona Gourlay (2010) and Maria Neophytou, to take a few examples, have all engaged with

different dimensions of the UN's peacebuilding initiatives. Increasingly, the EU has also emerged as an important research focus (Kappler 2012; Bouris 2011). In contrast, there are few studies that focus upon the question of how national-level actors have developed peacebuilding capabilities.

A large number of the contributions to the research literature also tend to be case studies of specific interventions which are focused upon specific instances of interventions. While this focus can easily be justified in its own terms, it does nonetheless limit the transferability and wider application of key research findings. Although my own analysis focuses upon a single policy actor it does potentially have a broader application by virtue of the fact that the comprehensive approach framework and research findings can conceivably be applied to other practitioners of liberal peace.

In addition, this project does not seek to work within a problem-solving framework. It does not seek to identify how specific components or aspects of peacebuilding could be more effectively implemented. This is important because a number of contributions to the research literature (Orsini, 2001 is one example) take this as the basis of their engagement. They are therefore predisposed to evaluate, to assess, and to feed back into an improved practice of post-conflict peacebuilding. While these preoccupations provide a clear basis for applied research, they also represent a certain delimitation or restriction of the terms of reference.

I have identified how my research diverges from established and predominant trends within the research literature. However, it is equally important to consider points of convergence. Within the critical research literature, my contribution most closely resembles Pol's (2014) assessment of bottom-up approaches to peacebuilding. In this contribution, he highlights the range of power effects that are associated with emancipatory or bottom-up contributions. In acknowledging the shift that has occurred within peacebuilding practice, he acknowledges the significance of the 'local turn', in which peacebuilding actors have come to recognise the limitations of managerial and top-down approaches to peacebuilding. He argues that this, however, has served to legitimise external interventions that operate from below – that is, through and within the agency of local actors.

In addition, my research findings also closely overlap with contributions that consider the bureaucratisation and functionalisation of peacebuilding. Goetschel and Hagmann (2009), to take one example, have considered the bureaucratisation of peacebuilding. They suggest that bureaucratisation is of particular interest because it highlights how the emancipatory and transformative components of peacebuilding are – through their incorporation into bureaucratic structures and processes – subject to various reconfigurations and realignments. In a manner which clearly recalls my own analysis, they directly address themselves to ‘prescriptive’ and ‘instrumentalist’ logics, thereby establishing how peacebuilding practice has diverged from its ostensible pretensions and representations. As an additional benefit, their contribution also highlights how the incorporation of local actors into the liberal peace framework frequently (re) produces tension and contradiction (2009, 64, 65; also see Björkdahl and Höglund 2013). Williams and Mengistu (2015) offer a similar analysis when they highlight the tension between bureaucratisation and the explicitly stated objectives of liberal peacebuilding.

In a similar way to Pol’s contribution, my analysis has sought to examine what occurs when participatory and ‘bottom-up’ frameworks are incorporated into neo-liberal structures and frameworks. In engaging at the interface between the internal and external, I sought to demonstrate how ‘domestic’ agency became subject to a pervasive reconfiguration. In stressing the pre-eminence of the wider context, I sought to draw attention to the percolation of ‘instrumentalist’ and ‘prescriptive’ logics. I observed that internal innovations within liberal peacebuilding had, in the terms set out by Pol, put in process a whole host of innovative and subtle disciplinary and regulatory techniques.

## **Further Research**

My research has established the basis for a critical framework of analysis focused upon the tensions and contradictions of liberal peacebuilding. The research findings have broad-ranging implications, which extend around the broad circumference of liberal peacebuilding. I have already discussed the potential contribution of my own research, and will now proceed to highlight some of its key limitations – this will, I anticipate, help to establish the basis for further research.

The most obvious occlusion derives from the fact that I have offered a purely textual analysis. I have not therefore gone beyond the text to engage with the wider context in which texts are produced. For this reason, the process of policy formulation – the interactions, relations and structures through which policy is produced – could conceivably provide the basis for further research. This research could engage at both the departmental and interdepartmental levels, tracing key interactions and their manifestation at the level of the policy document. Given the wider context in which ‘domestic’ policy is formulated, analysis could also engage at the regional and/or international level. Each of these contributions would bring an added dimension to the current research, bringing out features and attributes that, for reasons of space and coherence, have hitherto remained unexplored.

The relationship between materiality and discourse is another question that my research does not engage. This is the question of how material or extra-discursive influences relate to, and impact upon, discourse. My analysis has focused exclusively upon discourse, and it has not, to this extent, sought to ask how this reference point is situated within a wider set of interactions and relations. Two intriguing questions have therefore remained unaddressed: What is the relationship between discourse and material practices? What does it produce and what does it enable?

My analysis has sought to understand how the products of liberal peacebuilding are constituted, being brought together in unstable and volatile compounds. In teasing out tensions and contradictions, I sought to demonstrate that the comprehensive approach could be understood with reference to its points of breakage, both potential and actual. This represented a clear departure from the established policy imperative, which instead proposes to engage the approach at points of reconciliation. This has important implications for how the text is approached and engaged. Conceivably, this approach could be productively applied to other products of liberal peacebuilding. For instance, concepts such as ‘partnership’ and ‘ownership’ are fragile compounds, virtually inviting the push that shatters them into pieces. In engaging at these points, researchers would find new grounds for a critique of liberal peacebuilding.

The respective components of the comprehensive approach framework could also potentially be applied in other instances. Deepening, contextuality

and complementarity have, to this extent, a potential and relevance that extends beyond the current study. The main benefit of this framework is that it explicitly and concisely articulates principles that have previously been internalised and implicitly assumed. Peacebuilding actors would, to this extent, recognise the significance of deepening but not the precise term itself. The main benefits of the comprehensive approach framework are therefore that it provides clear, explicit and transferable terms of reference that can be applied in different settings and to separate objects.

Additionally, my research has only focused upon a single policy actor. Although the British government has provided my main point of focus, I have also intermittently referred to other policy actors. For reasons of parsimony, I have not been able to engage these broader actors in any great depth or detail. However, conceivably they could also provide the basis for an analysis which asks how the comprehensive approach framework has been adapted and applied by international, regional and national actors.

In general terms, my research can be said to be part of a critical project which consciously and deliberately seeks to challenge the epistemic and practical basis of liberal peacebuilding. In questioning grounding assumptions and challenging deeply embedded tenets and axioms of truth, it contributes to further research engagements that seek to take apart the power relations that adhere within the heart of liberal peacebuilding. It strongly argues against the proposition that liberal peacebuilding should be understood within a delimited or narrow framework of reference and instead insists that it must be perceived, understood and analysed within a broader framework of reference. This is an important insight which establishes a firm basis for further research.



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